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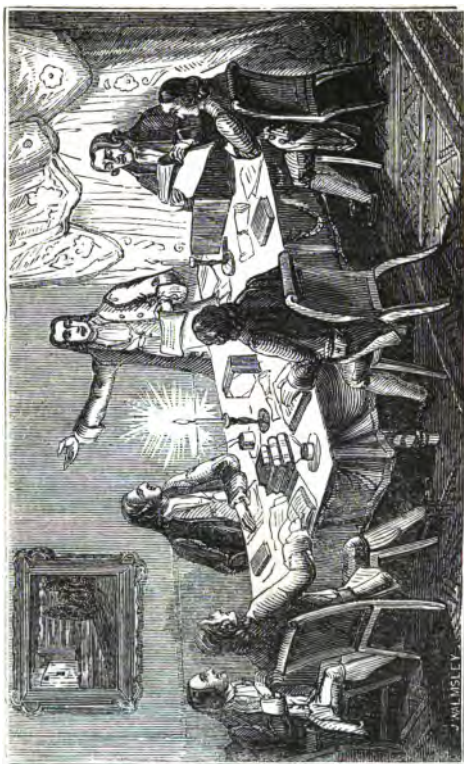
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Caroline W. W.
Jusko to her
Mrs. Bennett
May 13th 1840



9

THE
COMIC CARPET-BAG;

CONTAINING

THE LYING FAMILY,
THE LIFE OF MY UNCLE,
THE POLANDERS,
AND
THE BASTARD OF NORMANDY.



LONDON :
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May 5, 1931

THE LYING FAMILY.

I. WAS born in a most enlightened age, in an age which has produced millions of great men ; and it will be readily perceived that I am not speaking of the age of Louis the Fourteenth.

O, my illustrious contemporaries ! what altars will not posterity raise in honour of you ! You have not invented gunpowder, it is true, but a thousand years hence mention will be made of your *phloscopes*, your *thermolampes*, and your panoramas : ventriloquism and phantasmagoria will not be forgotten.

It will be said, it was in such a year that sugar was proposed to be made of beet-root : the rock of Cancale will still be cited for good oysters, and the *cadran bleu* for first rate parties, the same as the *Cafe Procope* and the *caveau* were formerly noted as the rendezvous of ignorant poetasters, who have left behind them wretched dramas that our ancestors absurdly called master-pieces. Alas ! how little did they know of the matter ! Poor harmless souls ! they did not see an inch before their noses.

They called (witness the insipid Boileau) a spade a spade, and Rollet a knave. They never imagined that we should have more wit than they. In their time, virtue was no more than a vain term, now it is a word of which we are justly vain : they painted vice and guilt as dangerous monsters ; we made indispensables of them ; and there is no one who is not glad to commit a venial error, in order to merit the title of a hearty fellow.

Ages of ignorance and superstition ! the people could absolutely believe in a God, the Creator of all things !!! Credulous mortals ! they lay down to sleep impressed with

this pleasing idea—they awoke with this pleasing idea, and they had not thought of having recourse to materialism alone for all the consolations of which the human race have need at the moment of restoring to the earth the sad relics of their existence.

You were told with an air of truth : (every book said the same). The Supreme Being created man pure and spotless ; woman good, gentle and virtuous ; but both man and woman suffered themselves to be persuaded by a serpent that made them eat forbidden fruit ; and this serpent was—the devil ! Thence a rooted antipathy to serpents,—a deadly war against serpents. Every perfidious man, who betrayed his neighbour, was designated under the name of serpent.

Poor serpents ! This odious prejudice is now, however, perfectly got the better of : we have lately done you more justice, we are well convinced that without having recourse to your artifices, man would have always been ambitious, cruel, and sanguinary ; or if circumstances required, servile, base, and cringing. We know beyond the shadow of doubt, that even had you not tempted woman, she would nevertheless have been cunning, coquetish, as well as vindictive.

Thus, amiable serpent, in order to efface the disgusting stain so long fixed on your head, we have revived to your honour and glory the divinities of paganism ; we consider you as the god of eloquence and medicine, as the symbol of peace and commerce. Man carries you in his heart ; woman wears you round her neck, on her arms, and at her ears : all are desirous of possessing their cadducees, their protecting genius, their talisman.

You insinuate yourself every where, Mr. Serpent : into the drawing-room, into the antichamber ; you associate with the man in place, with the idle man, with the journalist, with the author ; you even appear at the theatre, where you are heard hissing each new piece ; in short, the world is accustomed to insults, or a coward to a caning or horsewhipping.

You are carressed, you are worshipped ; and when the volcanos of Auvergne shall one day be rekindled, when their long confined lava rushing forth, shall swallow up the superb cities in their vicinity, in a word, when our children's children's children who shall have escaped the fiery submersion, shall dig among the bituminous ashes to dis-

cover their lost property, they will find your effigies, as the images of Phallus and the god of Lampsacus were found in the ruins of Herculaneum.

But, where am I digressing !—Intending to confine myself to the human race, I have been talking of serpents : in this manner does the historian wander from his subject without dreaming that he is doing so.—However this may be, I freely announce myself for the greatest liar that the world has ever produced. Every one has his fault ;—mine is lying : and as a sin openly confessed is half pardoned, I am already secure of the indulgence of a great part of my readers.

Many persons have gone beyond the truth in respect to their origin : as I have an antipathy to do what several others have done before me, I shall be satisfied with relating mine according to truth.

I am descended in a direct line from the great Corneille.—Read the life of Peter Corneille, read the history of the French theatre, read the annals of the drama, or rather, read none of all these : the task would doubtless be superfluous.—There is not one of you, I dare say, who does not know that about the year of grace one thousand six hundred and forty-two, Peter Corneille, without the aid of a woman, gave birth to a male child, which he named *the Liar*.

This event made a great noise in the world, and augmented the celebrity of the father. Corneille tenderly loved this son, and in order to place him in a situation to appear honourably at court and in the city, he confided him to the care of Bellerose, one of the first and most excellent actors which had appeared in the tragic line under the reign of Louis the Thirteenth.

The attention paid by the tutor to the young pupil, procured for the one magnificent presents from Cardinal Richelieu, and, for the other, a degree of fame which quickly extended itself to the extremities of France, and even to those countries where literature began to be known and respected. No where till then had lying been practised with so much wit and grace. Each word of my ancestor became a proverb. *The liar* was the topic of every conversation : all Paris was desirous of seeing, hearing, and admiring *the liar*.

The Gascons and Normans flocked in crowds to the capital to take lessons from him : but unfortunately the

Gascons and Normans brought their wives and daughters with them. Wives and daughters, the latter particularly, are very curious.—Their curiosity in this instance cost them dear.

Our liar was seducing, his cajoleries were listened to, his gilded pills were swallowed : when the Gascons and Normans returned to their respective provinces, the provinces suddenly became peopled with a swarm of little liars. These little liars grew great liars, and in the space of a century, Gascony and Normandy were the exclusive patrimony of the liars.

The Cracs, the Cragignacs, the Verdacs, the Dirlacs, and all the other names ending with *ac*, were in as high reputation as those of Turenne, Colbert, and Louvois ; a new colony, composed of quack-doctors, barbers, and tooth drawers, established themselves on the smiling banks of the Garonne : they prospered, and in a short time multiplied exceedingly.

Several of these colonists, however, wearied with a sort of life which did not appear to them to possess sufficient variety, took advantage of the numerous embarkations at the port of Bordeaux, and went to exercise their talents in the three other quarters of the globe.

Provided with a talisman which was then only known among the most polished nations of Europe, they were everywhere speedily received with open arms ; everywhere they made proselytes ; everywhere they were loaded with presents and benedictions ; while in those same countries they hooted, spit upon, or otherwise treated with scorn and contempt the propagators of truth.

Hateful truth ! thou art equally unpleasant to the most powerful monarch and the vilest artisan : to the one thou discoverest the misery of his people, the perfidy of courtiers, the vexations of ministers, and the arrogance of their subalterns :—thou revealest to the other the causes of his gross ignorance, thou stirrest up the impure source of his vices and defects, thou wouldst remove the veil that obscures his sight.

But where is the wonder that both the monarch and the artisan shrink from thee, when thou hast the boldness to offer to put thy finger, impregnated with the salt of conviction, into the wound that forces the blood from their hearts ?

Truth ! thou wilt always be proscribed and persecuted ;

spite of the beauty with which it has pleased heaven to adorn thy features, thou wilt generally be avoided. Thy language is too severe ; thou neglectest to rub with honey the edge of the cup in which thou presentest the potion to thy patients.

Go, imitate falsehood : he was born with a countenance absolutely hideous ; but in proportion as he grew up he became penetrating, subtle, cunning, ingenious ; he felt the necessity of concealing the deformity of his visage : now, notwithstanding his ugliness, nobody repulses him. And why not ! because his language is specious, because he covers with flowers the precipices of life, because the beverage prepared by his hand intoxicates man and transports him into the realms of illusion. He flatters, he caresses, he scatters poppies on the eyelids of the unhappy.

He tells a tyrant that he is adored by his subjects, an oppressed people that their grievances are about to be redressed, an old and liquorish woman that the lilies and roses bepaint her cheeks, a jealous husband that his partner is faithful, a poet that he surpasses Racine, a country comedian that he is preferable to Lekain, Preville or Garrick, and an actress that she is virtuous, without jealousy of her rivals, inconstancy to her lovers, or malice towards the manager.

Falsehood.——Halt there ! I have been preaching long enough ; let me return to the colonists of the Garonne. I have already observed that some of them, tired of boasting of their descent and their prowess, and no longer finding persons sufficiently credulous to give free scope to their imaginations, quitted France and set out on their travels, in order to put the seal to their glory.

My father, Macaire Hugues Verac was of this number, who after many years spent from his native country, felt the necessity of returning to it, and still more the wish of dazzling the eyes of his countrymen with the lustre of a fortune which could only be acquired by adventures in the new world.

He accordingly loaded a vessel with diamonds from the river of the Amazons, with pearls from Mexico, with topazes from Arabia, with emeralds from the Persian gulf, with ingots of gold from Peru, and trusting himself with these treasures to an element which in a moment of anger can overturn the finest projects, and destroy the most

brilliant prospects, he weighed anchor and sailed towards the place of his nativity.

Alas!—Æolus, jealous of my father's good fortune, raised him up enemies as dangerous as they were powerful. His furious winds, let loose by their master, disturbed the tranquillity of the waters; the sea revolted at the moment when M. de Verac approached the shores of France, and in its wrath swallowed up the diamonds, the pearls, the topazes, the emeralds, the ingots of gold, all the riches of the Indies, of Asia and Peru.

The vessel, split by the violence of the contending elements, was presently engulfed in the yawning abyss: the crew perished with it, and all the assistance that the inhabitants of the coast could give, was serviceable only to my father. But, O, heavens! in what a situation was he dragged from the foaming waves! nearly in that in which the first man came into the world; scarcely had he even remaining enough to procure an equivalent for Adam's fig leaf.

He was thus conveyed to the military hospital at Havre: there being made to cast up the water that he had drunk so much against his inclination, he was soon restored to life. A collection made in favour of the unhappy person who had suffered shipwreck, furnished the nabob Verac with the means of quitting the hospital: moreover, my father did not want philosophy: he quickly forgot his accident, and considering the transitory fortune he had possessed, as a charming dream that had beguiled him with its flattering illusions, he concluded there was nothing better for him to do than to oppose resignation and courage to the rigour of fate: that is to say, in other words, he resolved to resume the employment he had formerly exercised on the banks of the Garonne, that of a barber.

To say the truth, it cost dear to the first victims that fell under his hands. He began in the villages and small towns his endeavours to acquire afresh his ancient dexterity: being summoned to shave the son of an attorney, who was going to marry the daughter of a rich farmer, he cut off the half of one of his cheek, and the unfortunate lover was in consequence obliged to postpone his nuptials for six weeks.

The farmer's daughter, who had no great affection for the attorney's son, made my father a present for the ser-

vica he had rendered her ; but the young limb of the law, not less vain of his figure than a peacock of his tail, enraged to see himself thus slashed in so conspicuous a part, vowed revenge against Verac ; and would doubtless have put his threat into execution, if the unfortunate devil had not exhibited far more agility in his legs than dexterity in his fingers.

My father, however, notwithstanding the weight of his disgrace, was not a man to perish of hunger. Necessity is the mother of industry.—Wherever he passed he attempted new means to procure a livelihood: in one place, assuming the grave and authoritative tone of an empiric, he sold for bad eyes an ointment made of dandelion and cow-dung ; in another, for the use of the fair sex, a balsam which was neither more nor less than goat's excrement mixed with that of magpies. I leave it to be judged what an agreeable exhalation proceeded from the village coquettes who anointed themselves with this precious unction !

"My balsam is wonderful," cried my father, "for the preservation of the bloom of youth ; my balsam is excellent for restoring beauty to the faded cheek ; in Turkey, Persia, China, and Bengal my Balsam has performed miracles ; it made the favourite sultana of the sublime porte look twenty years younger than she did before using it ; it saved the life of a Spanish princess, who, falling in love with her page, and being afterwards forsaken by him, was on the point of dying of languor and despair.

"At Parma, Milan, Pisa and Florence, I have been persecuted by the whole medical tribe on account of the invention of this extraordinary balsam : go to Paris, Lyons, Marseilles, and Bourdeaux, you will hear nothing else talked of but my balsam ; you will see old women there as frolicksome, and as thinly clad as so many young girls, and still courted by young Adonises who have no suspicion of their age.

"What is this wonderful wonder owing to ? why to my balsam, which restores grey hair to its original colour, which smoothes the deepest wrinkles, and renders the skin soft and the flesh firm ; to this valuable or rather invaluable balsam, which has cost me nearly half a century's labour and study.

"At Lima I sold a box for twenty piastres ; at Naples for fifteen ducats ; at London so high as thirty guineas, and the only reason of my quitting England was because I

could not comply with the multiplied demands of my numerous customers.

"But you will perhaps say—How then will you sell it to us, we who are only poor people?—Ladies and gentlemen, do not be alarmed; it is not with a view of emptying your pockets that I am come here, but purely and simply to make myself known to you, and to render you a service, which, as your fellow-countryman, I think it a duty incumbent on me to do, your approbation being the only reward I have at heart to obtain.

"My fortune is made, I have no longer any occasion for money; I do not sell my balsam, I give it to all those who may wish to have it—for the trifling sum of sixpence a box. Here is the balsam! here it is! sixpence a box! only sixpence a box!"

The produce of the sale of the miraculous balsam placed my father in a situation to continue his journey and to arrive in a decent manner at Falaise, a considerable town in Lower Normandy. There, however, he was obliged to relinquish his profession of quack; for though Falaise was forty leagues distant from Paris, its inhabitants were not to be cheated so easily as the good people of Brittany; and although after the example of the wits of the capital they might sometimes take chaff for wheat; poor Versé would have been exposed to the public derision, and even to something worse, had he attempted to sell them any of his odoriferous compound.

Ah, why did he not understand alchymy?—Perhaps in analysing his materials he might have discovered the philosopher's stone: or, at least, why did he know nothing of the dead languages?—By giving a Greek appellation to his balsam, he might still have found fools and dupes.

My father, a perfect Proteus, changed once more his form to please the Falaisians and wheedle them out of a subsistence.—He let his beard grow, and hiring a lodging in an obscure and mysterious garret, he procured several owls and other nocturnal birds and animals which are vulgarly considered to be ominous.—There, speaking an unknown language, or, to be more correct, a gibberish composed by himself, he passed for a celebrated Persian who told fortunes.

With a long bamboo in his hand, which he had bought for little or nothing of a sailor from Havre, he described pretended cabalistical circles before the weak-minded vi-

sitors who came to consult him. On a walnut-tree table much worm-eaten, was placed an old bible which he had picked up at a book-stall in the very town of Falaise. This precious book, he said, contained the five tables of Moses, and these five tables of Moses comprised the destinies of them present and to come.

Verac never delivered his oracles till the close of the day. —In the morning he visited the ale-houses, the coffee-houses, and public places in disguise: he was at the bottom of every piece of news; he took advantage of the gossiping of the old women, of the indiscretions of the servants, and of the backbiting of the indolent of all ranks who frequent country towns. He collected, he amalgamated every thing, and from this curious compound of truth and falsehood, he himself composed the five tables of Moses.

His predictions, therefore, were not always without foundation; some of them having been realised, in a short time nothing else was talked of in Falaise and its vicinity, but the celebrated Persian.—Verac filled his strong box, and acquired a reputation that soon gave umbrage to the magistrates of the place.

A tax-gatherer coming to consult the five tables of Moses, Verac, informed of several particulars relating to him, boldly cast his horoscope, and predicted that in less than three days he would lose his place, because he had applied to his own use a considerable part of the public money confided to his care.—Accordingly, in about three days the fellow not only lost his place, but was arrested, thrown into prison, and in the course of a week set in the pillory and transported.

An old President also deigned to descend from his gravity to ascend the pythical abode of my father.

“You are married,” said Verac to him.

“Yes, Mr. Persian.”

“A young wife?”

“Yes, Mr. Persian.”

“You are jealous?”

“A little.”

“A great deal?”

“It is true; I see it is no use attempting to conceal any thing from you.”

“You are avaricious?”

“I don’t throw my money out of the window.”

"But you lock it up so carefully in your coffers that it is impossible for your wife to get at it."

"I give my wife sufficient for all her necessary expenses, Mr. Persian."

"All her necessary expenses?"

"All, absolutely all!"

"You deceive me, and before a month is past, your wife will be run away with by a handsome young officer of dragoons."

"An officer of dragoons! O lud!"

"Rich, amiable, and liberality itself."

"What do you tell me, Mr. Persian? It is a report that is circulated in the town, but I would never believe it."

"Others believe it for you."

"What must be done to prevent this misfortune?"

"Open your strong box to the discretion of your wife."

"My strong box!"

"Suffer her to dispose of your riches in a noble manner."

"Dispose of my riches!"

"Do not prohibit her from going to balls—"

"Balls corrupt young minds."

"Allow her to frequent the public walks, the theatres."

"The theatres are the nurseries of vice."

"Do not hinder her from following the fashions of Paris."

"The fashions of Paris! that is enough to ruin me entirely, Mr. Persian."

"And above all, be no longer jealous."

"No longer jealous! that is impossible. I will seek legal redress."

"You will be laughed at."

"I will have my wife shut up in a convent."

"She will soon find her way through the gratings."

"I will—I will go and hang myself!"

"You could not please your heirs better."

Nota; the president's wife was carried off, yet the president did not hang himself.

Among the curious attracted by the Persian's celebrity, Verac noticed with extraordinary pleasure the daughter of a dentist. To judge from her first approach, she was one of those ingenuous beauties formed to receive any impression you might wish to make on them. The young woman either from having nothing else to do, or from being tired of her state of maidenhood, was extremely desirous

of having her fortune told. She inquired with unaffected simplicity whether any man thought of her, and whether, as her father had said, she would not be married before she was twenty-five? Charmed by her manner and appearance, Verac suddenly changed his batteries, and, strongly taken with the charms of his artless visitor, he resolved to turn his science to the profit of love.

"Your age," said he, taking off his spectacles and looking her in the face with eyes sparkling like fire.

"I am just seventeen," modestly replied the girl.

"And you wish to be married?"

"The young ladies of Falaise are all married at seventeen."

"And you would be very fond of your husband?"

"O! yes, if he were as amiable and attentive as my cousin Masson's."

"Is your father rich?"

"He is dentist to the foundling hospital, which brings him in four hundred francs a year."

"Of course there is no portion to be expected?"

"I can work well at my needle and embroider to perfection:—my father has often told me *that* will be my portion."

"Well! my dear girl, I will open the book of your destiny, and I am happy to inform you that before a week is over, your father will receive a visit from a man steady but not old, rich but not opulent, tender but not doting, and who will ask him for your hand."

"May I not be permitted to see him before he takes this step?"

"You fear that he will not please you?"

"I should be able to instruct him in what manner to go about it."

"Very well. Do you not sometimes go and walk on the esplanade?"

"Every Sunday with my cousin Masson."

"You shall see him there; he will address you."

"I long to be acquainted with him!—To-day is Thursday—ah!—still three days to wait!"

"Be patient, I swear that he shall not disappoint you."

"Ah! Bless me, Mr. Persian, I have no money to pay you."

"I require none."

"Stay, accept at least this slight mark of my gratitude ;

it is a little gold *etui* that my cousin's husband gave me on the evening of the marriage."

"I accept it on condition that you will take it back from the hands of him who is destined for your husband. I will transform it into a talisman that he shall present to you next Sunday on the esplanade."

It will be seen by this short conversation that my father entertained serious views on the dentist's daughter, and that it was himself who was to approach her with the talisman in question.

Accordingly, the young lady had scarcely taken her leave, when the fortune-teller, Verac, taking a retrospect of the divers events of his past life, concluded his reflections by this wise and philosophical monologue :—

"I am but five and thirty years old, though my beard, my spectacles, my turban, my Asiatic robe, and the painted wrinkles on my countenance give me the appearance of at least eighty. I am here playing a part which I cannot sustain much longer: every person in place, the members of the long robe and the clergy, as well as the magistracy, begin to be alarmed at my predictions.—I am talked of in all companies: enemies will doubtless spring up against me: banishment or the rope will be my fate, if I do not soon quit my profession.

"From the age of twenty I have constantly been wandering from climate to climate, from place to place, and I have not enjoyed a single instant of repose. My five tables of Moses have produced me near ten thousand francs; that will be sufficient to support me creditably in Falaise, by taking a wife and fixing in some reputable employment.

"Chance has often brought about happy marriages.—I meet by chance with a dentist's daughter, whom I marry: she is ornamented with graces and simplicity; her heart has not yet beaten for any one; it will beat in unison with mine.—She will be faithful to me from duty as well as from inclination; we shall be surrounded with a charming offspring, which will be the happiness of our old age. The die is cast, Falaise is the end of my travels, and Hymen the termination of my troubles."

After Verac had maturely weighed and arranged this plan in his head, together with all the means of putting it into execution, he took up a razor, and in three minutes made himself look as young as Eson: *then* lighting a large fire, he reduced to ashes his bible, his worm-eaten, walnut-

tree table, his robe, his bamboo wand, and got rid of his owls and other familiars; *he then* clothed himself in a handsome fashionable dress, and became quite a different man, *he then* filled his pockets with the treasure he had amassed, *he then* gaily quitted his garret, with the intention of going to hire a commodious and elegant apartment in the best part of the town of Falaise; *he then*—he was *then* arrested at the door as he was leaving the house, by the officers of the Police, who were sent to apprehend the Conjuror, from some information that had been given to the magistrates. Such an occasion for lying had never before presented itself to my father.

"Where have you been?" abruptly demanded the exempt who was at the head of the guard.

"Gentlemen," replied he, with an air of simplicity, but without seeming disconcerted, "I am an apothecary: (the dress he had chosen was well adapted to the medical profession, and which suggested this idea to his mind,) I have just been visiting a poor woman very ill on the third story."

"You have not then, been having your fortune told by the cheat that lodges up stairs?"

"I do not understand what you mean, sir!—Oh, I have it—you allude to the Persian!"

"Yes, to the Persian as you call him.—He will have his fortune told by the Police,—we have orders to arrest him."

"I am glad to hear it.—You will catch the bird in his nest, for just before I came down I heard over my head a great noise—like the clanking of chains—and then, such hideous cries!—like, I cannot tell what. Upon inquiring what was the cause of the violent disturbance, the nurse said it was the Persian Conjuror, making his—his invocations."

"Quick, quick," exclaimed the exempt to his men, as satisfied as if he already had his prey in his grasp.

He directly ascended the staircase, followed by the guard, with intrepidity; while my father with not less haste pursued the opposite direction.

Verac however was so well assured of not being recognised in the town that he did not abandon his project; (a project by the bye for which he was indebted for his liberty) and after having changed his dress for the third time, he gave himself out as a Paris merchant who came

to Falaise on business, and boldly took a lodging in one of the best houses in the *Rue Saint Apolline*.

It was there that making the necessary dispositions to appear suitably in the eyes of the lovely Clementina, he amused himself with the thousand and one stories told of the wonderful Persian, and the no less wonderful circumstance of his sudden vanishing, unobserved by any one.

The good women with their beads, said in a tone of solemnity, that on such a day, at such an hour, they had seen in the air a great black cloud : that they had very distinctly remarked a man *on horseback* on a monkey, and that in all probability this monkey was the devil carrying off the Conjuror.

Other persons less superstitious, but deeply skilled in politics, and well instructed in all the secrets of the state, (those persons, in short, who fabricating news, publish them in a whisper to a hundred thousand ears, with the express injunction of not mentioning a word to any one) pompously gave out that the pretended Conjuror was a great personage, a celebrated spy sent by the enemy for the purpose of examining the manufacture of Falaise, and then to carry into other countries the different branches of their industry.

They ventured to say that such a dangerous man had been clandestinely secured, and that he had undergone in prison the punishment usually inflicted on characters of that description. Verac strongly supported these absurd tales, adding, that Paris itself was filled with a crowd of impostors, who understood sorcery no better than the Persian, but who found out the means of making many more dupes than he had done.

A fresh event, a house belonging to a receiver of taxes taking fire, presently made the Persian and his prognostications to be forgotten. Nothing was talked of but the receiver and the conflagration which had happened precisely at the moment when he was to have delivered his accounts to the treasurer of the province.

In short, my father fully resolved to marry, could fearlessly occupy himself in preparations for the nuptials. He had an interview with Clementina, at which he restored her *etui*, and accompanied this restitution with a present, which she was prevailed upon to accept as a pledge of his promises.

The young Falaisian consented to all he proposed : the

dentist of the foundling hospital desired nothing better than to be well rid of his daughter.—Besides, ten thousand francs possessed by his son-in-law, so far dazzled the eyes of the poor dentist, who out of his four hundred livres a year allowed him by the hospital, could afford nothing in favour of his dear Clementina, that he returned thanks to heaven for having sent a suitor to his daughter, who was so disinterested as to take her without any portion.

The contract was prepared, the banns were published, and the 26th of July, 1758, at nine o'clock in the morning, the curate of St. Giles's (the parish in which the bride resided) gave the usual benediction to Macaire Hugues Verac, son of Claude Silvester Verac, citizen of Langon, and to Clementina Agnes Despinasse, younger daughter of Hyacinth Zachary Despinasse, dentist of the foundling hospital of Falaise.

It may perhaps be imagined that this day was a day of rejoicing for the bridegroom and bride. No such thing: it was rendered remarkable by the most gloomy event that can happen at a wedding. The father-in-law, Zachary Despinasse, who had long measured his appetite by the standard of his income, and who supported a short allowance as readily as a prebendary then made his four meals a day, Despinasse for the first time overstepped the bounds of prudence: unable to contain himself at the sight of the splendid dinner given by his son-in-law, he ate with such quickness and ardour, that even before the dessert was brought on the table, he expired in the arms of two of the guests, who prevented him from falling from his seat on to the floor. Medicine, emetic, clyster—nothing could save him.

After this accident, the affectionate couple voluntarily imposed on themselves a continence of three days.

Hymen!—at that word I shudder and my hair stands an end.

And what may occasion so violent a sensation?

The recollection of the insults he caused my father. Verac, who believed himself the most skilful liar of the age in which he lived found his master in this Clementina, mild, simple, artless, innocent as she was, and whose heart had never beat for any one. This Clementina, who was my mother, produced in something more than six months after her marriage a thumping boy.

Well! What is there so extraordinary in all that! we

every day see women brought to bed at the expiration of seven months. Must we therefore suspect their virtue? Shameful effect of perversity! Such are men! immorality has so far vitiated their minds that they will no longer believe women are prudent. Study anatomy before boldly judging in a matter of such delicacy.

Be it so! I will study anatomy and speak no more of Clementina. I will not mention the various causes of complaint that my father had against her, as for example, her being a coquette, deceitful, prodigal to excess, vain of her beauty, imperious and obstinate—more obstinate than a mule. The young creature had certainly not played her cards ill for a novice. My father knew of but one remedy for so many evils: this was to keep my mother so fully employed, as to leave her no time to adorn her person. It so happened that she was almost continually pregnant: insomuch, that in about nineteen years she had two and twenty children, eight daughters and fourteen sons, of which, by the grace of God, I am the second.

I cannot suppose that the reader will expect to have a circumstantial detail of the private life of each of the members composing our numerous family. It would require twenty-two volumes for that purpose, and I fear that he is already tired of the little *duodecimo* before him. In consequence, I will confine what I have to say, to my eldest brother and myself. As to my other brothers and sisters, they have each embraced a profession conformable to their tastes, and none of them have belied the blood from whence they sprang. However, that they may not be obliged to recur to them in future, I will here give a slight sketch of each, and then resume without farther interruption the thread of our history.

Simplice Verac, the third of the boys, as great a liar as myself, which is no small praise, is excellently established in the *Rue St. Martin* in Paris: he keeps a shop in the linen-drapery line, and sells his goods at one third loss, that is, one third under the current price.—Thus, at Paris, people get rich by ruining themselves.

Christopher Verac, not less industrious than Simplicite, keeps a warehouse not far from him, containing a vast assortment of novelties; such as English cassimeres from Rouen, *Malines* from Lyons, India muslins fabricated in Switzerland, and *Oachemires* from Sedan.

Moses Verac has set himself up as a hatter; and in or-

der to procure custom, he conceived the idea of making his shopmen walk the streets in a sort of Russian cap, or hat, of his own invention. At present there is not a lackey who does not wear one of Moses Verac's Russian hats.

Felix Verac pursued a very different career: he is a distinguished author; but what is more extraordinary, he is extremely modest and passably rich; he has written fifty-three different pieces, and all have been favourably received.—He composes dramas better than *Diderot*, vaudevilles better than *Pennard*; tragedies better than *Corneille*, and *balembourgs* better than *Bievre*.—His epic poem, entitled the Flea, will render his name immortal: meantime, he pays his debts, and dines every day at the *Restaurateur's*, with persons of fashion, at a *louis* per head.

Nicaise Verac is a printer and bookseller, an honest man in the full extent of the word; well informed, as are all the booksellers of the present day, who have diligently studied the secrets of their trade; he is also very disinterested and prepossessed in favour of authors; he has not, like some of his brethren, made his fortune by publishing counterfeits, an act he always thought derogatory to his character.

As the reign of philosophy is passed, he has sold by public auction all his *Montaignes*, his *Mablys*, his *Rousseaus*, his *Voltaires*, and other rhapsodists of that sort, who encumbered his shelves, or were eaten by the rats.—His whole stock now consists of a complete assortment of new novels and romances, which are excellent, full of wit, graces, genuine satire and morality.—I doubt not but the *Lying Family* will one day be added to his collection.

Ovid Verac is the seventh of my brothers, and he who has made his way best in life:—he is a theatrical manager, and possesses wit as well as solid judgment: he is never deceived with respect to a new piece: besides, the committee to whom he submits them is composed of men of the law and persons scrupulous to excess, who lend money on pledges at reasonable interest; it is impossible their penetration should not perceive—all the defects of a work. In consequence, out of a thousand pieces presented to him, there are nine hundred and ninety-nine accepted.

Ovid Verac loves and esteems the whole race of authors; he entertains no prejudice against some, no partiality for others; he opens his heart and his purse alike to all: he respects his actresses, he is never familiar with the actors:

he will one day be the richest individual in France ; especially if the public continues to flock to his theatre with *billets blancs*, and if he takes care to preserve the friendship of the proprietor, a man extremely frank and sincere—almost as much so as myself.

My six other brothers have been brought up to the law and to finance. Some of them have composed the sublimest of codes, and the others have made us bankrupts ; a negative merit, I confess ; but that is not to be despised now-a-days, any more than common honesty.

What shall I say of my sisters !—Four became *religieuses*, at the epoch when religion got out of fashion ; and four were married, immediately divorce was allowed by the law. The four *religieuses* are since married, and the four others are divorced from their husbands. They are all eight now about the same level ; that is saying enough, perhaps too much.—It is time to return to my elder brother, Hyppolitus Verac, who, by rights, should have taken the first place in my work.

There are things of such acknowledged veracity, that it would even be ridiculous to bring them into question for a moment. Thus, I shall not lie a jot in saying that Hyppolitus Verac possessed much wit, erudition and capacity. With an ardent imagination and a violent tendency to criticism, it by no means suited his inclination to languish unknown in the narrow confines of Falaise ; a more extended sphere was requisite for the exertion of his talents, and Paris alone offered him the materials of which he stood in need. It was therefore to Paris that he came to study men and manners, and to acquire, what is stiled, the knowledge of the world.

Terrified at the torrent of public morals, he at first attempted to oppose it by a dyke of his own invention and construction ; but presently, like the feeble reed, he found himself obliged to bend his head beneath the imperious yoke of the winds, and he waited patiently till the storm should subside. Vain expectation ! The storm never abated ; and the days of Hyppolitus Verac were passed in inglorious repose.

His imagination, at length, subdued every obstacle, and he dared to raise his voice anew ; but, then, more adroit, more formed by experience, he attained his aim by a road that appeared diametrically opposite to it : he combated pride and ambition, by attacking modesty and disinterest-

edness; he let fly against talent and genius a cloud of arrows, which recoiled on ignorance and folly.

May not the cunning of a liar be discovered in this ingenious war? A fencer often kills his adversary by a feint, and a great general frequently gains a victory by a false attack. But as every thing in course of time becomes common, *non bis in idem*: the same means used twice in a plot lose much of their power and efficacy.

Hyppolitus Verac, indefatigably occupied with his plan of reforming mankind and rendering them better, applied diligently to the sciences abstract, physical and moral; geometry and chemistry above all afforded him great advantages: he had found out by geometrical calculations, the number of paces that the present generation had deviated from the right line of virtue; and the number of those it would be necessary for them to take in order to return to it, presuming that it would be impossible to accomplish it by the same rout.—He had only to discover a chemical process to decompose man, to separate matter from the vital fluid, to diminish the weight of the one by detaching it from all the corporeal parts which tend to its putridity, and to give the other more activity by passing it through a refining crucible.

Had my brother succeeded in this discovery, there is no doubt but his name would be transmitted to posterity; but so many persons were interested not to undergo the fiery purification, that every thing was put in practice to make his enterprise fail.—Indeed, the philosophy of Hyppolitus was too dangerous for it to find many proselytes; and the philosopher attracted so many enemies that he was obliged to disappear.

But we will let him speak for himself, and relate *as how* he was forced to abandon his labours. The following is the letter that he wrote to his disciples some time before his disappearance. I think it my duty to give it in this place, in order to make my readers fully acquainted with that Madame *Gallia*, with whom it was made a crime in him to be connected: that celebrated lady whose malady has for several years mocked the attempts of the most skillful physicians in Europe, and who, thanks to the repose which they have at last permitted her to enjoy, has recently been restored to her children and faithful friends.

I request my readers will observe that this letter was written in the year 1796—*Quale tempus, talis scriptura*.

Paris, 1796.

Madame *Gallia* is, beyond contradiction, the most celebrated woman in Europe; time will inform us whether she is also the most illustrious; she is stout and above the middle size; formerly very gay, now sorrowful and hypochondriac, but of a very robust constitution, since she has got the better of a disorder, under which she suffered seven years, and of the attention of six thousand physicians, *more or less*. Madame *Gallia* is considerably in years, and her misfortunes have given her the appearance of an old woman.

In 1789 she approached her critical moment; her health grew impaired; and immediately a crowd of physicians presented themselves, pretending to cure her, but really to pillage her. Though her affairs were greatly deranged, her remaining fortune was considerable enough to tempt the desires of the faculty.

Among this crowd of Hypocrites, one was distinguished, whose name was Philip, a very different man from Philip, Alexander's physician. This doctor coveted the whole property of Madame *Gallia*, and prescribed for her in consequence. To this Philip were added several other of the profession, who at first, seemed only his subordinates, but who presently ruined him in the esteem of Madame *Gallia*, in order themselves to have the honour, that is the profit, of the cure.

Poor unhappy patient! how cruelly has she been treated! Under pretext of warming the blood, which they affirmed to be chilled and almost coagulated, they for three years made her take all that is heating and irritating in the vegetable kingdom.

In consequence, the stomach of Madame *Gallia* was drenched by *Sudorifics*, such as scabious, holy thistle, germander, borage, bugloss, scordium, burdock, &c.—*Antisyphilitics*, such as juniper, saffron, sarsaparilla, liverwort, elecampane and sassafras.—*Aperitives*, such as celendine, pilewort, dropwort and columbine.—*Astringents*, such as cypress berries, medlars, cornelians, &c.—*Carminatives*, such as thyme, wild thyme, mint, camomile, anniseed and fennel.—*Diuretics*, such as wormwood, fumiter, hops and viper's grass.—*Emmenagogues*, such as mugwort, tansy, rue and sabine.—In short, every thing exciting, inciting and provocative, contained in the garden of nature.

It may easily be conceived that after such a mode of

treatment, the blood of Madame *Gallia* grew inflamed and forced itself a passage, insomuch that the poor woman became absolutely delirious. Observing this, more than one doctor, *amicus sanguinis*, declared for bleeding.

At this decree of the faculty, all the surgeons, farriers, cowlleches and barbers of the environs flocked together. She was bled in each arm and leg, and as the blood still did not flow to the liking of the phlebotomists, they finished by opening the jugular vein. * * *

After two years of bleeding, incisions, amputations, scarifications and *cruciations*, the patient fell into a state of exhaustion, languor and consumption * * * Such was the situation of things, when recollecting my former intimacy with the poor lady, I resolved to go and pay her a visit, and to offer her my assistance at a moment when I knew she stood in so much need of it.

Upon entering her apartment, I saw several physicians round her bed. * * *

When the patient perceived me, her countenance appeared to expand ; she smiled on me with grace, but the doctors regarded me with contempt. I approached the bed, and said to her, in a tone of anxiety, "How do you find yourself, Madame, to-day ?" She was about to answer, but a doctor prevented her by saying—

"The lady is well, very well, all things considered, and she would be still better if she would follow our advice.—But perfidious friends put a thousand chimeras in her head : they are always reminding her of past times, awakening recollections that too much affect her ; and as her fibres are extremely irascible, she is then subject to spasms and agitation of the nerves, which will infallibly degenerate into epilepsy ; if she has not the fortitude to break off her former connections, she will delay her recovery, and in part destroy all the service that we are desirous of rendering her."

A long sigh escaped Madame *Gallia* upon hearing this account ; then, resuming her gracious air, she addressed me in a sweet but feeble voice :—

"Come near me, nearer, nearer still.—You are my friend ; you, oh, yes ! you are indeed my friend !—These gentlemen tell you that they are my friends, that they alone sincerely love me ; and yet how does it happen that they inspire me with not the slightest confidence ?"

At these words the doctors trembled, and their looks

sufficiently informed the patient that "they were resolved she should either accept their attendance with a good will or by force. Madame *Gallia* sorrowfully regarded me.

"See," said she, "how much I am altered :—once I was beautiful !"

"Oh ! yes," interrupted I, "you were beautiful, amiable, irresistibly attractive : all the pleasures resided with you, eternally accompanied you.—The Russian, the German, the Italian, the Englishman, even flocked to behold you, and those who had not seen you, expired with regret. At present——."

A doctor arose from his seat, and frowning extremely,—"You are very unfeeling, Sir," said he to me, "to torment the lady by such ideas. Admitting that they were true, still your misplaced frankness might be well dispensed with : but what you advance is absolutely false, notoriously so :—the lady was never better than she is at this instant ; her constitution is forming and acquiring strength every day : it must be allowed that she has not that air of frivolity which you seem so much to regret, but what she has gained is more valuable than what she has lost. Look around, and dare to say that she does not inspire respect."

"Oh ! I shall presently know which of you is in the right," said the lady. (She raised her voice and called one of her attendants.)—"Province, bring me my portrait."

"Which, madam ?"

"That which was painted ten years ago. Give me also my glass.—Ah ! these two judges will doubtless terminate the dispute."

Province returned with a large picture, in which Madame *Gallia* appeared adorned in all her charms, and set off to advantage with the various ornaments she formerly possessed. A mantle of azure spotted with flowers fell gracefully from her shoulders : the helmet of Minerva guarded her head, and her countenance was lovely, though noble and commanding.—Her large blue eyes were eloquently tender and beautifully contrasted with black arched brows. The portrait exhibited an air of satisfaction and serenity : at her neck was suspended a medallion, the painting of which was entirely effaced.

"This is the likeness of my father," said she ; "it was in perfect order, until a wicked wretch blotted it all over with ink."

After having viewed this picture for some time with a sort of melancholy pleasure, Madame *Gallia* took up the mirror. Scarcely had she cast her eyes upon it than she uttered a piercing shriek, and threw down the glass, which broke into a thousand pieces.—“Ah! I am sufficiently convinced,” cried she, addressing herself to me; “it is you, you alone, who are my friend.”

At this moment one of the physicians in taking out his pocket-handkerchief drew along with it a cap, which was not the cap of Hypocrates. Madame *Gallia* saw it, and her cries redoubled.—“Ah! sir,” said she to me, “I fancied I observed a bleeding bandage.”

The doctors, perceiving that their presence was not desired, withdrew, but their eyes, as they left the room, told me that I should one day pay dear for the preference which I had obtained. When I was alone with the sick lady she recovered her assurance and a great part of her amiableness.

“My friend,” said she, “I have many things to talk to you about. I last night had a terrible dream, and I cannot conceal the impression it has made upon me: this little medallion, defaced with ink, has reminded me of all my miseries, and retraces to my sight all the horrors I so lately beheld in my sleep.

“Yesterday evening, when my cruel physicians left me, I felt an inclination to read, and I took up one of the newspapers with which my ears are daily stunned. What it contained filled me with apprehension; it was late; the clock struck midnight, and my light suddenly became extinguished, as if some one had purposely blown it out. I am not a coward; but this event, though little remarkable, made a deep impression on a poor creature in my situation.

“Notwithstanding it was dark, fear induced me to open my eyes; I listened with inquietude, I looked about without seeing any thing; at length, I heard a rubbing against the curtains of my bed, something very cold touched me, and I plainly distinguished a heavy sigh. I trembled every limb, and soon fainted. How long I was in this state of insensibility I cannot say. When aroused from my lethargy, I was much astonished to see a light in my chamber; my bougie was however still extinguished, and the light which struck my eyes seemed to have no natural or known cause.

“I started up, supporting myself on my elbow, and

stared about me with all the eyes I had, to discover the source of this mysterious light. Presently I saw the wall of my chamber suddenly open, though without the least noise, and a phantom, which came from the aperture, approached me. The terror that seized me did not prevent me from knowing it to be my father. Nevertheless, fear so far got the better of my tenderness, that I was on the point of crying out—'Phantom avaunt!' But I felt that I had not the power of articulating a single word.

"The spectre sat down in an arm chair, and turned towards me. It remained a considerable time perfectly immovable, and fixing its eyes on mine, its looks pierced me to the soul. I continued also in one position, observing it earnestly. After a long silence, he thus addressed me :

"My daughter, you suffer greatly, and you have still much to undergo : it is not in my power to assuage your grief—my heart will not permit me to aggravate it. You were culpable, I pardon you ; I am not wholly faultless myself. Too great mildness, too much weakness, made me neglectful of my duty towards you : neglectful, I say ; for I was not ignorant of them. I calculated too much on your affection : being a father, it is not astonishing that I should not have believed my daughter capable of a crime. I repeat, I pardon you ; and from the abode where I am, disengaged from all mortal connections, my eyes are still turned upon you, my heart still offers up its wishes for your happiness. You are my daughter : taught by experience, at length learn to be prudent, and hope for the best.'

"Having said this, the ceiling of my chamber appeared to transform itself into a dome, and a man dressed in black stood by the side of the phantom. The figure of the stranger was uncommonly majestic ; he pointed with his finger to the summit of the dome, upon which significant signal, my father ascended like a light vapour, and was presently lost in a brilliant cloud : the man in black also disappeared, and I remained alone, plunged in thick darkness.

"I then fancied myself transported into a gloomy forest, where I could see nothing around me but noisome insects and venomous reptiles, all of which seemed to seek me as a promised prey : I actually felt the cold and glutinous scales of the serpent crawl over my skin. On some steep rocks, hard by, owls and other birds of night joined their

discordant notes : the howling of wolves and the roaring of tigers I could hear at no great distance ; and frightful chasms opened beneath my feet. I strove to fly ; my feet slipped on human bones and skulls ; I fell over carcasses ; and the monsters that pursued me, seized me with their claws, and began to devour me. I fainted for the second time.

" Alas ! my friend, it was only a dream : on awaking, I saw my bed surrounded by my cruel physicians, and methought I again beheld the nocturnal forest ! With what has since passed you are acquainted : judge of my situation."

After Madame Gallia had thus concluded, reflecting on the discourse of the phantom, I replied :—" Madame, forget not what your father said to you : be prudent and hope for the best. These few words contain your future destiny. A time will, without doubt, arrive, when you will be delivered from the medical tribe who seem to vie with each other in ruining your health. One man alone will take your recovery upon himself."

" Alas !" interrupted Madame Gallia, showing me her lacerated members, " reduced as I am, who will be found hardy enough to attempt such a miracle ?"

" Who shall attempt it, Madame ! why he, who, out of pure love for you, has already defended your property that your malicious neighbours presumed to invade."

" Ah ! what do you say ! In the midst of the evils which overwhelm me, have I still left a protector ?"

" Madame, till this moment I have made an open profession of lying. *Old birds are not caught with chaff* ; excuse me this homely proverb ; it is just, and explains to you in two words the motives of my dissimulation ; but with you, Madame, I fear not to use sincerity. I will tell you nothing but truth ; because it will at least be pleasure to you to hear it ; you who so long have been surrounded only by false and perfidious friends. I repeat it, then, Madame, in spite of your exhausted state, and the weakness of your stomach, you have still many resources remaining : indulge the hope, that the generous mortal who has embraced your interest, will snatch you from the clutches of the faculty, and that, instead of employing violent and irritating methods to effect your cure, he will attain that desirable object by removing, one by one, the causes of your anxiety,

by restoring your original gaiety, and, at length, by re-establishing peace and happiness in your heart.

"A thousand successes already assure you of his talents. He is the support of the weak, the father of the orphan, the consoler of the unfortunate, and the terror of the wicked. You will one day congratulate yourself on having known him, and on having granted him your confidence. I am not ignorant that, till now, every step has been taken in order to prevent him from seeing you ; but your daughter, *Lutetia*, whose conduct towards you is not free from reproach, and, who, heaven be thanked, repents of her injustice, is impatient for his approach, and calls for him with loud cries : all your children, (I speak of those who have preserved any sentiments of tenderness and humanity,) form the same wishes, and extend their arms to receive him. The day on which he shall assume the government of your house, will be one of the most glorious you ever saw."

"Ah ! why is he not at hand then ?" cried *Madame Gallia*, raising her eyes toward heaven. "I am so deeply plunged in despair that I know not to what saint to address myself ; I have been stripped of all—even of my religion. The most sacred things have been profaned in my sight ; the scandalous vociferations of impiety have shocked my ears, and by a terrible mixture of crimes and sacrilege, while atheism has been preached up to me, I have been forced to acknowledge the Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul. Tormented by anxiety and remorse, I have consulted my conscience ; but, alas ! that had no consolation to afford me."

"Such upon every occasion has been the conduct of your enemies. To destroy the physical part, they begin by attacking the moral. They formerly did the same with regard to your father. You will doubtless still experience some checks ; but this Machiavelism will not be of long duration, and these very commotions will be productive of your convalescence—your complete recovery—when your virtues will appear with more lustre than ever.

"The German, the Russian, the Prussian who admired you, shall treat you with additional respect ; the Spaniard will be always flattered by your alliance ; the Italian, become wise by the example of your misfortunes, will be faithful to you from gratitude ; the Englishman even, the

proud Englishman, will lay down his haughtiness at your feet. All your neighbours will be your friends ; and when the peace that you so much desire—that they desire as much as you—shall be consolidated, he to whom you will be indebted for it, shall terminate his glorious exploits, by confirming your religious opinions, by leaving you the free exercise of the sacred worship of your ancestors, and by restoring tranquillity to your conscience for ever.”

This, my dear disciples, was the last conversation that I had with Madame *Gallia*. Believing we were alone, I had exhausted all my eloquence to encourage her, and to inspire her with the necessary fortitude to support her miseries with patience ; but one of the physicians, he in fact who had let the cap fall from his pocket, had concealed himself under the bed, and overheard our discourse. When I quitted Madame *Gallia*, he slyly escaped from his hiding place and joined me at the bottom of the stairs.—

“ You are an enthusiast,” cried he, his eyes sparkling with rage ; “ your head is disordered, you too must be bled ; I will go in search of my brethren, and to-morrow you shall hear farther.”

Had the doctor at this moment been provided with his surgeons, and they with their instruments, he would certainly not have suffered me to proceed, but have conducted me to one of the *humane* hospitals, where the operation would have been performed without delay ; but as he was alone and dared not try his strength against mine, I had time to get beyond the reach of the pursuits with which he menaced me. For nearly a month, my friends, you have been ignorant of my existence, you knew not whether I was dead or living ; it is to assure you of my personal safety that I have written to you from my secret asylum, and have explained to you the cause of my silence. We shall, I trust, meet again when my predictions are accomplished, and when Madame *Gallia* is at liberty to receive me openly.

That moment is, perhaps, not far distant. In the meantime, constantly follow your system ; lie freely and boldly to secure your lives and property : you see the danger I have encountered for once speaking the truth. May my example, my dear disciples, make you prudent, and preserve you from the *epidemical disease* that has lately carried off so many of our brave countrymen !—Farewell,

HYPPOLITUS VERAC.

N.B. The predictions of my brother have been realized : Madame *Gallia* has entirely recovered her health and beauty, her numerous physicians are despised, her defender is covered with glory, and the lovely *Lutetia* has faithfully promised to behave properly in future ; Madame *Gallia* now keeps a numerous and very brilliant court ; her neighbours every day pay her the tribute of their admiration, all her friends congratulate her and each other on her recovery, and, what must above every thing render her calm and contented, is the respect that will henceforth be entertained for religious opinions : she will no longer be forced to acknowledge the Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul ; in the same manner as, at certain epochs, the unfortunate wretches who groaned in prison were forced to join in the cry of *liberty and equality* !

I at length come to what concerns myself. The reader is pretty well acquainted with my father, he knows something of my brothers, but what I am, what I do, where or how I have lived he is yet to learn. It is, methinks, high time that I should begin to talk to him of my exploits, of my *lying* career. My surname is already known, my others are Mark, Luke, Roc, Loup, Cloud. They savour a little of the taste of my god-father, whose discourse was constantly confined to monosyllables.

Is it necessary that I should give my own portrait ? Should another undertake the task, he would, doubtless, describe me little, thin, pale, round shouldered perhaps ; he would paint me with legs like St. Malo, knock-kneed, pigeon-toed, an unmeaning face, and the step of a clown ; but, as I am desirous that the reader should conceive an advantageous idea of me, I shall make him a sketch exactly as I appear in my own eyes. I am tall, handsome, well made ; I have the countenance of an Adonis, the bloom of Zephyrus, the noble air of the Belvedere Apollo, with the force and majesty of Hercules, I possess a vast deal of ready wit, and a never-failing fund of vivacity ; to which, after mentioning my insurmountable courage, I shall only add, in this place, that I speak my native tongue in its utmost purity.

My youth was signalized by a thousand droll pranks : the time I passed at school was far from unpleasant ; I continued at the college of Falaise till I was eighteen. I obtained every prize, and was punished only once, which was for explaining to my master a passage of Horace,

which he himself could not comprehend. As soon as I had become sufficiently acquainted with Greek and Latin, I abandoned Homer and Virgil, and read *Robinson Crusoe*. It would be difficult to express the pleasure I received from that work. I was so enthusiastically attached to it, that my very dreams were of voyages and adventures. *Gil Blas de Santillane* turned my head entirely.

"My resolution is taken," cried I to myself one fine morning, throwing my exercises into the fire, "I too am desirous of fame and of being the hero of a tale of wonders; I too wish to build a hut in a desert island, and to find consolation in the society of a faithful *Friday*."—Alas! I burned to seek at a distance what I had every day at hand. Asses brains are no rarity at college; and as to addled eggs, I frequently discovered the head of a chicken in those composing the omelettes sent up to our table.

But the idea of wandering on foot, on horseback, on mules, among mountains, in forests, in the company of robbers or bears, of savages or lions, to sleep in an inn or under the canopy of heaven, on straw or in a tree; to overreach muleteers, to be surprised by storms, to meet with shepherds and hermits, to be received and entertained in gothic castles or ruins; to become preceptor, steward, secretary, minister, apothecary or physician; all this, I say, heated my imagination, and I could think of nothing but how to escape from school.

This project required consideration. The porter of the college, who had obtained the name of *Cerberus*, was the true porter of the lower regions. Forbidding and incorruptible, money and civility would have been resorted to in vain. The walls of the building were at least twenty-five feet high; in consequence, a leap would endanger my limbs. I had but two legs, both of which were necessary to enable me to put my travelling plan into execution. I recollected in the Spanish Novel, that a lover being surprised with his mistress escaped by a window, and descended by a rope ladder or silken cord. But how were these sort of ladders made? I was ignorant; Robinson Crusoe formed one of linen; but had I cut my whole stock of shirts into slips, or tied one to the bottom of the other, I should not have provided myself with a ladder long or strong enough for my purpose.

I was one day walking about the court of the college in

despair, at the fruitlessness of my reflections, turning over alternately the leaves of *Gil Blas* and *Robinson Crusoe*, invoking the protecting genii of these heroes who had overcome such miriads of obstacles, and absorbed in a crowd of confused ideas, when I suddenly ran my head against a cart-wheel. This incident roused me from my reverie. I lifted up my eyes; rubbing my forehead; but I presently forgot the pain occasioned by the blow, on perceiving in the cart twenty or thirty empty wine casks, which were about to be conveyed into the country to be replenished.

Without troubling myself with consequences, I climbed into the vehicle, examined all round to find a commodious situation, and at length decided to take up my quarters withinside one of the casks; but, alas! I was no sooner in possession than I repented of my rashness: the bottom and sides of the vessels were covered with thick dregs of a reddish colour, which quickly dyed my face, hands, and clothes. I should gladly have quitted my post, had I not been retained by the shame and the punishment that I had reason to think awaited me, and which it seemed to me impossible to avoid, when I should be forced to explain my conduct and the cause of my disguise.

A grain of self-love was added to my apprehension: I ventured for a moment to think I resembled *Diogenes*, and, proud of imitating that philosopher, by chusing a tub for my habitation, I determined to bear the disagreeableness of the dregs as well as its *alkalic* odour, and to keep up my courage let whatever might happen. "Providence," cried I, "my destiny is in thy hands, I am resigned to it."

By this time the cart was in motion, the axles creaked, the casks rolled against one another, the carter smacked his whip, and cried, "gee-ho," the horses paced the pavement of Falaise, and in a few minutes we were clear of the town. The motion became easier, the vehicle being off the stones, the jolts were less frequent and less violent.

I had a little respite; and it was high time, as I was threatened with the most unfortunate fate of *Regulus*. O, *Gil Blas*! O, *Robinson Crusoe*! O, *Diogenes*! thought I within myself, what would you say could you see me in this situation? I had two lumps on the right side of my head, three on the left, four on the shoulders, two dreadful bruises on the knees, and, to complete my misfortunes, my best grey silk coat was changed to purple. Purple is

suitable only to kings. My nankeen breeches seemed as if they had just come out of a dyer's tub, and my hat, to judge by its form, would rather have been taken to belong to a cardinal, than to a poor scholar.

What would become of me? Where should I dare to show myself in such a uniform?—During this monologue, the cart kept advancing and my sufferings augmented. Ill accommodated as I was, I had still another enemy to combat, which was sleep. I felt heavy—intoxicated doubtless by the fumes of the dregs—and notwithstanding the pain arising from my numerous contusions, it was difficult for me to keep my eyes open. At length, thanks to heaven, we arrived, about the dusk of the evening, at the farmer's habitation—"God be praised," cried I to myself, "I shall presently, perhaps, be able to breathe freely." The cart stopped, the horses were taken off and led to the stable. The farmer's wife came out of the house to meet her husband.

"Have you brought the money with you," said she.

"Seventeen hundred francs," replied he.

"Pray bestow your charity on a poor lame sailor, dying of hunger," said a beggar standing near the farmer, but who had not been perceived by him till he spoke.

"Are these times to ask charity?" cried the farmer, repulsing the beggar; "away with you directly, or I will let my dog loose upon you."

The mendicant retired without murmuring; the yard gate was shut upon him; the farmer and his wife retired into the house, after ordering their lad Ralph to unchain Sultan and Cæsar. Ralph let loose the faithful guards, went his usual round with them to see that all was safe, returned whistling to the stable, and in about half an hour every thing was quiet, and the whole family gone to rest; at least, observing no light, I judged that to be the case.

My situation may be conceived; and yet how was I to escape from it? Sultan and Cæsar majestically strutted about to the extent of their empire on all sides. Sultan was of the race of bull dogs, and Cæsar of the wolf breed; both were above the middle size of the canine species: at the least noise their ears were cocked up, their monstrous jaws opened, and they assumed an offensive posture. If I appeared to such a pair of enormous giants they would doubtless tear me in pieces; if I remained in my cask, I should not be taken out alive in the morning. I should be

suffocated, nothing was more certain. Let me stay where I was or venture forth, death was to be the reward of my thoughtless enterprise.

"Ah ! poor Luke !" said I softly, "you had better have been contented with eating addled eggs in college, than to have thought of seeking them in the inns of Andalusia. Thou wilt pay dear for thy folly, depend upon it."

Thus my sorrow began to attack me ; despair afterwards took possession of my soul ; I cursed the unhappy pride which had induced me to compare myself to Diogenes, and I plentifully shed the tears of bitterness and repentance, forgetting that that philosopher had never wept in his life.

At last, fully resolved not to expose myself to the devouring tasks of Messieurs Sultan and Caesar, I endeavoured only to diminish the painful constraint of my situation ; and I thrust my head out of the cask to inhale the pure air, of which I stood so much in need. The atmosphere was more serene than my heart ; the moon, obscured however by some passing clouds, threw but a feeble light on the objects around me. However, I could sufficiently see to lose nothing of the scene that was acting before my eyes, and which became a fresh subject of terror to me.

From my position I overlooked all the exterior of the farm. At a little distance was a wood, and as I regarded it, my heated imagination conjured up a thousand phantoms.—Each tree appeared to me a man in ambuscade ; at the noise of a screech owl, I fancied I heard the cries of a child whose throat they were cutting ; the whistling of the wind through the trees, I took for the roaring of wolves ; (I have since that time read Mrs. Radcliffe's romances, and I confess that I experienced, while in the shelter of the cask, all that she strives to inspire by her mysterious and gigantic descriptions.)

My terror, however, was not at its height ; my knees refused to support me ; I was quickly forced to withdraw into my old concealment. The trunks of the trees became animated, moved forward, joined each other, and among them, I believed I could distinguish the poor sailor who had been refused the alms he had solicited. My suspicions acquired certainty when I heard a voice, that of the crippled mendicant, pronounce these words,—“ I tell you, he has just received seventeen hundred francs.”

Upon this, I began to tremble for the life of the farmer, and would willingly have apprized him of his danger ; by

this means I should prevent the murderous designs of a set of villains, save the farm and save myself, by forcing the gratitude of all those it contained. But the dogs—Sultan and Cæsar—how came it that they had not smelt the approach of their enemies? Because Sultan and Cæsar, sharpened by hunger like the generality of watch-dogs, which are fed very sparingly, had eagerly seized a piece of meat that the robbers had taken care to throw them over the wall: Sultan and Cæsar, resembling two ambitious men, fiercely disputed the dangerous prize without foreseeing the miserable consequences of their voracity.—Death was already within them.

The poison which circulated in their veins caused them a giddiness, which far from bringing them to a sense of their culpable imprudence, seemed only to augment their fury. This fury, however, soon subsided, and changed into convulsions. Alas! I had the sorrow to see those wretched animals expire on the very dunghill that had served them as a field of battle.

Scarcely had they rendered their last sigh, when the assailants, who had awaited the moment of their death, scaled the walls, and endeavoured to find the means of entering the house. They were six in number, armed with pistols and cutlasses: they began their operations by forcing the bars of a window on the ground-floor; and already congratulated themselves and each other on their prospect of success, faithfully promising to make a fair division of the seventeen hundred francs and whatever else they should take possession of.

Indeed, I could not see anything to oppose them: nobody had heard or perceived them but myself, and what could I, without arms, bruised all over, and harassed with fatigue, what could I attempt?—the only thing in my power, and that doubtless of which heaven suggested the idea to my mind.—I cut, or rather sawed with a knife that I carried in my pocket, the cords which tied together and held in the cart the empty casks. A dozen of them, at least, rolled together on the ground, and the noise they made was such as to stun me for a while; but the effect of my thunder was to awaken the farmer; who soon appeared at his window, calling out Sultan and Cæsar with all his might.

"They are poisoned!" cried I, encouraged by the success of my scheme; "defend yourself—your house is attacked by thieves."

' Hardly had I pronounced these words before several balls whizzed by me. I took shelter behind the casks which still remained in the cart, and waited till the family should come to my assistance. I was not left long in suspense: the farmer ran in his shirt to call his men, who, armed with pitchforks and other instruments, rushed on the villains, who sounded a retreat, knocked down four, and put the other two to flight.

As soon as the victory was gained, the farmer, who had great obligations to me, hastened to where I was to enquire whom he was indebted to for his safety, and by what fortunate circumstance I had been so near his premises at such a convenient season.

"You ask me a great deal," replied I; "examine me a little more closely, and you judge whether I am in a situation to answer you."

The farmer's wife, encouraged by the shouts of the conquerors, now appeared with a light in her hand. The sight of me produced the effect of Medusa's head: every one started back with apprehension, imagining they had to do with the devil, or some red hobgoblin.

"In the name of heaven," added I, in a lamentable voice, "do not fancy me a supernatural being, but afford me the assistance I so much stand in need of."

"Whoever you are," replied the farmer, "I am indebted to you for my own life, and perhaps for my wife's and children's. I shall never be able to return the obligation: nevertheless, tell me how I can serve you?"

"Give me a lodging for the night."

"Readily;—follow me."

"Something to eat—I can hardly stand."

"Poor fellow! Quick, wife, bring out the best we have."

"And a fire to dry my clothes."

"You shall have others—I will provide you with them."

Accordingly I was conveyed into the house, for it was absolutely out of my power to walk; a large fire was kindled, and I was made to swallow a couple of glasses of excellent wine. I made my dinner and supper at the same time, and as I foresaw that interrogatories were about to assail me afresh, I requested my host to conduct me to the apartment destined for me; observing to him that I did not feel perfectly restored, and that after having slept I should doubtless be more collected.

He consented with a good grace to what I required. Ralph showed me to a kind of loft, in which a pair of sheets and a woollen rug had been previously spread over a quantity of straw; I did not, however, regard so minutely, but undressed myself and laid down, after wishing good night to Ralph, who, to my great surprise, carried off all my clothes, and locked me in, as if I had intended to effect my escape.

Sleep was so heavy upon me, that I did not trouble myself with the history I had to forge for the following morning; my senses were "steeped in forgetfulness," while addressing my thanksgivings to the God who protected Gil Blas, and who had already released me from an imminent danger.

A German author calls sleep, "the giver of good;" an appellation, in my opinion, highly suitable. When I awoke, it was with my strength thoroughly restored, and a clearness of ideas for which I returned thanks to "the giver of good;" but the "giver of good" had not secured me from the depredations of the rats and mice,

On opening my eyes, I saw my bed was assailed by a formidable army of these *quadrupeds*. Shall I say antipathy, or fear, made me utter a loud cry? I moved my arms and legs, in the hopes of sending them scampering; but they were so firmly established on the woollen rug, upon which they were feasting, that all my efforts were useless.

I then resolved to abandon my bed to their mercy.—Will it be believed, that far from appearing terrified at my movements, they pursued, and actually began dancing around me? In vain I called lustily for the farmer, Ralph, and the whole house to come to my rescue; they were deaf to my voice; I could no longer resist such superiority of numbers; one of the rats, doubtless the chief of the band, for he was the greatest, the oldest, and the balddest, having carried his effrontery so far as to bite the end of my foot, I saved myself by jumping out of the loft window.

And how? I shall perhaps be asked. By the assistance of a thick cord attached to a pulley; no uncommon thing for a chamber which was more frequently a granary than a sleeping-room. I gently slipped to the ground, where I arrived without any other accident than two large blisters in my palms, occasioned by the friction.

Scarcely had I reached the bottom, when I heard loud bursts of laughter ; and looking about to discover from whom they proceeded, I perceived, near the door of a cow-house, a fat wench standing with her hands to her sides, to keep her from choking. At first I felt embarrassed : at length, however, I defied her raillery, and went up to her. She ran into the stable among the cows : I followed her : in her hurry one of her petticoats fell off, which I took possession of : it could not weigh less than thirty pounds. That did not signify ; I was distressed, and without hesitation put it on. Being by that means able to appear before my host and his wife in a decent state, I walked towards the house : on approaching it, I suddenly felt a smart blow applied to my back, just between the shoulders, and turning round to learn whom I was indebted to for such a mark of respect, I found it to be Ralph, who, having mistaken me for the girl of the farm, who was his sweetheart, had honoured me instead of her with one of his tender caresses.

He asked my pardon : I asked him for my clothes. "There they are, drying in the sun," said he, pointing to my silk coat hung on a line ; "Jeannetton has washed them for you this morning. What a figure they were. Where could you have got into such a pickle ! It was just like ——"

"Like wine lees," interrupted I, turning away from the clown ; and taking down my clothes, about half dry, I carried them into a barn, where, with much labour and difficulty, I at last succeeded in getting them on.

Offended by the laughing and joking of Ralph and Jeannetton, little satisfied with the manner in which the farmer had thought fit to recompense me, by sending me to sleep in a loft infested by a swarm of rats and mice ; apprehending besides a variety of questions which would necessarily oblige me to discover my name and family ; fearing, moreover, that I should not lie with success, and in consequence be shamefully conducted back to the college, I formed the resolution to decamp without bidding adieu to my entertainers.

One of the doors of the barn opened to the garden : I took advantage of this aperture, and collecting all my forces corporeal and mental, I took to my heels with such precipitation, that in about an hour I was upwards of two leagues from the farm. I had chosen a cross-road in order to prevent any unlucky meeting.

As soon as I fancied myself sufficiently secure, I sat down at the foot of a tree to rest, as well as to consider what course I should take. The reflections of a traveller in an unknown country, without money, without food, and with a devouring appetite, will seldom be of a very gay cast: What was to become of me? I was ignorant. Where was I going? I was ignorant. Two tracks appeared before me—one to the right, the other to the left.

"Let me think," said I to myself, rather sorrowfully; "if I am to believe the assertion of certain philosophers, the left-hand road leads to fortune, the right to honour and virtue. Fortune! Virtue!—Here are two very opposite paths: which shall I choose in order to escape reproach? The destiny of my future life, perhaps, depends on the choice I shall make. Faith, let chance decide it,—the *short straw* shall determine me; the longest shall be the right-hand road. Does not the fate of heroes and of empires frequently depend on the childish play of *short straw* and *wet finger*?"

As I was preparing my two straws, a young peasant girl passed by: I stopped her, and begged she would do me a small favour.

"If you please, Sir," answered she, smiling, "provided what you require is not too difficult."

"There is nothing more easy," returned I; "it is only just to take these two straws between your fingers, and let me draw one out."

"Two straws!—you are jesting, Sir."

"Quite serious: on the contrary."

I then informed her of my embarrassment, and the means I had resolved to have recourse to in order to be freed from it. She did not exactly comprehend all I said; but readily complying with my request, she mixed the straws, and offered me the ends to choose one. I happened to draw the shortest: that was the left-hand road. Shall I confess it? I was not dissatisfied with the short straw, to which I had inwardly given the preference, and I felt such a conviction of my future good-fortune, that in the hope of one day recompensing the young peasant-girl to whom I should in some measure be indebted for it, I asked her name and residence.

"My name is Augustina," replied she, jeering a little at my curiosity. "I am the daughter of Nicholas Maurille,

vine-dresser, at Saint Privat, the village that you see in the bottom to the right."

"To the right! I set off by the left, and shall return the other way—to introduce you a husband."

"A husband! I shall wait for a good while if I stay till you introduce him."

"I will add a portion."

"A portion! a husband!" repeated she maliciously; "are you your father's child, young gentleman, or are you the son of our lord of the manor, who promises a good husband and a fortune to all the girls of the parish?"

"He, doubtless, requires something as an equivalent for his kindness. Farewell, Miss Augustina Maurille."

"Farewell, Mr. Match-maker."

The young villager continued her road, humming a tune, while I took the left-hand road as fate had decided.

I had not walked more than a mile, before I discovered a church spire at no great distance: steeples are the light-houses for the traveller. If he is fatigued, the hope of arriving shortly at a place of rest and entertainment, gives him fresh strength and spirits: if he has lost his way, he is thankful to heaven for having sent him a guide. The sight of the steeple caused me no little joy: hunger began to assail me, and without reflecting that I did not possess a single doit, I anticipated the pleasure I should have in satisfying my appetite.

I had plenty of time to relish, and even to digest this ideal repast; for, in proportion as I advanced, the cursed spire seemed to retreat: I was almost tempted to believe it one of those fantastic lights, the account of which had so often amused my infancy. I walked upwards of two leagues before I reached it; but I thought myself amply recompensed for my trouble, when, upon entering the village to which it belonged, I found I was in a spot well known to me.

My surprise and joy were such that, still fancying myself the dupe of a flattering illusion, I asked a peasant whom I met the name of the place. "Leovillé," replied he. "'Tis the same—'tis the same," cried I, shaking him by the hand as if he had been an old acquaintance; and pray tell me, my friend, do you know whether M. Pessier is at home?"

"I just now met him with his two young ladies."

"With my two cousins!—Lucky short straw! it is to thee I owe this good fortune!"

Monsieur Pessier was a respectable and well-informed man. Grown grey under the yoke of the magistracy, he had for several years quitted the police, and retired with his daughters to an estate at Leoville, which belonged to him, and where I had been accustomed to spend my holidays. The good gentleman was my uncle, by my mother's side; he loved me greatly, and had taken great pains to forward me in my studies.

My cousins were the true portraits of their father; amiable, mild, compassionate, replete with grace, talents and wit. The eldest, named Eliza, had a particular friendship for me, and had for some time taken upon herself to form my taste according to her own ideas. She seemed, above all, to find great pleasure in tracing out for my approbation plans for the future.

"You will one day love," said she, sometimes in the course of our rural walks, "and it is that epoch of your life that will decide the happiness or misery of your existence. Avoid being too precipitate, or deceiving yourself on the tendency of your heart. Do not let it impose on you, nor seek a return to a sentiment which never existed; or if it did, was too ephemeral to be regarded. Such conduct, my dear cousin, would be the opposite of delicacy in an age when immorality was not erected into a system, and when the defects of virtuous principles did not seem indispensable to promotion.

"At present, a marriage is contracted, either because self-love is flattered by it, or because it is expected to be productive of variety, or finally, because by relations or credit, the lady may contribute to her husband's advancement. Such is the foundation of the generality of matrimonial connections.

"And what are the consequences? The ruin of the credulous woman who finds herself deceived, and her lasting chagrin on discovering that she has been abused by the man for whom she had sacrificed every thing, and on whom she depended for the happiness of her life.

"This is the lot of virtuous and sensible women, who, judging others after themselves, cannot imagine vices to which they are strangers; a motive with liberal minds for not censuring them too hastily for a fault that their innocence itself leads them to commit, and of which they become the victims by the depravity of the other sex.

"Never follow the path traced by men of this description : the perspective pleasure that they hold out to youth may, for a moment, prove irresistibly alluring ; but, when age has calmed the passions, what cause to excite the blush of shame ! How poignant must be the reproaches of conscience, for having received a virtuous education, and for having violated the laws of delicacy and honour !—And what then remains !—false friends : for no connection can be real or durable, that is not founded on esteem and the most scrupulous integrity."

Such was the prudent advice given me, and often repeated, by my cousin Eliza. I listened to it with a degree of attention and submission that encouraged her to proceed, and I promised obedience to her laws. We were frequently interrupted by the arch Mary, (the name of my younger cousin,) who would run up to us, humming an opera air, and maliciously break off our conversation by forcing me to spout with her a scene of *Iphigenia* or *Zara*.

When the scene was finished, and Mary had stabbed herself in form, I was desirous of resuming the discourse that we had dropped ; but the little hussey would strive to prevent it by saying, "Do not attend to him, sister : he is a liar : he every year promises me a song, but I have not yet seen a specimen of his poetical talents."

My only reason for relating these particulars, was to prepare the reader for the gracious reception I had reason to expect on presenting myself at my uncle's : in truth, I was treated as the only son and heir ; which would not have been the case had I confessed my desertion from college.

When my uncle asked me to what my unexpected visit was attributed, I boldly replied that our professor, whose appointment we had celebrated, had given us all a week's holiday.

My uncle seemed a little surprised ; but the cunning Mary, who would never believe that I spoke a word of truth, burst into a laugh, and ran towards the garden, for fear of compromising the dignity of my character. I followed her, and begged her to tell me the subject of her mirth.

"I laughed at the week's holiday your professor was so kind as to give you : confess, my dear cousin, that you have been playing some prank, some heedless trick, and that you are only come here to be sheltered from the ferula or cat-o'-nine-tails. For my part, I am glad of it, how-

ever it be : I was impatiently looking for the next holidays, and am happy to have this opportunity of showing you the progress I have made.

"I can imitate the nightingale to perfection, I sound the horn with my mouth, so as to deceive any one ; and I mimic the opera performers much better than last year : I have caught even their manner of speaking through the nose, and their wind-mill gestures. Observe," added she, placing one hand on her hip, and extending the other above her head ; "it is Achilles that speaks :

'Queen of my thoughts ! illustrious princess ! here
Fate dooms my ardent passion meet your ear.'

"That is it exactly !" cried I ; "the very thing, my dear cousin." And in order to hear no more of the history of the professor's holiday, I gave a kick behind, to imitate the princess who throws back her robe which had got under her heels, and I replied with dignity and tenderness :

'Ah, prince ! that one like you should condescend
To such a wretch as me to bend,
Excites my wonder——.'

I was about to be drawn into a long labyrinth of pathetic, when the amiable Eliza joined us.

"Mary," said she to her sister, "you have been long enough amusing yourself with my cousin ; now let me talk a little reason to him." So saying, she drew me along with her ; but Mary, before she quitted me, whispered in my ear : "My sister is composing a romance, in the style of *Heloise* : doubtless, she wants to consult you on some chapter. She is an enthusiast. Adieu, cousin : prepare yourself by the evening for a scene of ventriloquism."

I followed the steps of Eliza with the utmost docility, waiting for what she might have to say to me ; but we walked on for some time in silence, and it was not till we entered a thick grove that my cousin commenced the conversation.

"Do you love the country, cousin ?"

"Better than college."

"You are about eighteen, I think ?"

"Alas ! yes ; and I am still an ignoramus."

"You sigh !"

"Almost as much as you, cousin."

"Have you any cause for melancholy?"

"If I had, it would presently be forgotten in your company. Your presence affects me in a manner I cannot describe; something so consoling, so sweet, so——"

"Cousin, do you recollect my precepts on love?"

"They are engraven on my heart."

"Your heart?" replied Eliza, regarding me with a look of sensibility; "are you acquainted with your heart? Come, let us see: describe the situation of your heart."

"My dear cousin, there are only two agreeable ways of passing my time: with you, or thinking of you. During the night, when all around me is hushed to repose, when all enjoys the calm which is flown from my breast, I alone wake to reflect on you."

"What astonishing sympathy! What resemblance, what similarity of sentiments! Ah, cousin! till now, I have been happy: all my inclinations tended to my felicity. Beloved by a father whom I revere, by an affectionate sister, by real friends, employing my hours of retirement in the cultivation of the arts, the source of real and ineffable enjoyment, what more had I to desire? Why is nothing on earth of permanent duration? Why is the heart a prey to agitation? Whence the necessity of love, a passion which is productive of all the miseries of life?"

This confession at such a moment must, doubtless, appear strange. After what Mary had told me just as we parted, and the question of Eliza with respect to the situation of my heart, I had thought it suitable to reply by one of those extravagant phrases that we find in every book, and in the mouth of every lover: but when I saw her bosom heave, her eyes become unusually animated; when I heard her pronounce with the most touching accent, "Whence the necessity of love?" I was so confused, so humiliated, so sorry for my deception, innocent as it was, that without being able to offer a single word by way of apology, I fell at her feet, covered my face with her hands, and bedewed them with my tears.

Our situation grew more and more critical. Eliza, who had kept silent a moment to give free vent to her sighs, kindly raised me up, made me sit by her on a mossy hillock, and overcame me entirely by the following discourse, to which, I confess, I gave implicit credit.

"When absent from you, my dear friend, everything that tended to alienate you from my mind became insup-

portable : society wearied me : I found myself isolated in the midst of company : the flattering language of gallantry, the compliments of politeness, fatigued me beyond expression. Ah ! never did I so forcibly experience the justness of that maxim which says, *The indifferent woman proudly receives the homage she obtains from the gay world ; and the woman of sensibility is incapable of appreciating it, except the favoured object of her affections be present.*—In a word, my dear Saint Preux——”

“Saint Preux ! who do you mean, my dear cousin ?”

Eliza, without noticing my interruption, proceeded with increased warmth :

“What is it to me to be thought pretty, if you are not there to hear it, and if your eyes at the same time do not tell me that I please you also ? Admire how one sentiment, profoundly felt, annihilates all the little passions, and subdues every inclination that is not in perfect harmony with it ! Yes, dear Saint Preux——”

“Saint Preux again ! But cousin,—but—my name is Luke.”

“Yes, those who make a crime of love, have never experienced its power : it ennobles the soul : it renders us better, and exalts us, as it were, in our own eyes. It makes us the authors, the treasures of the happiness of the being we love. Ah ! my cousin, my dear cousin !”

“Leave me, quick, leave me ! my imagination is inflamed, my genius is kindled, ideas crowd upon my mind—leave me, I beg of you : while I am in this favourable mood, I will finish the chapter that I was obliged to give up this morning.”

“Mary was in the right,” said I to myself : “my cousin is an enthusiast, she is writing a romance, and she has been practising upon me.”

This little adventure stifled my passion in its birth. In my vexation, I went to pay my court to my uncle : I found him in his study, occupied in composing an harangue on fowling, and on the happy life led by those who amused their leisure hours in that sport.

“Hearken, Luke,” said he, as soon as he perceived me ; “here is such a speech as you never heard in your life. It is the true attic style.”

“What am I to understand by that, uncle ?”

“How ! Cannot you guess, you who are a rhetorician ! In composing a speech, I mean to say by the attic style,

that of which Aristotle, Demosthenes and Cicero have given the precepts, the example and the model."

My uncle piqued my curiosity by this explanation. Charmed to find an opportunity of displaying my erudition, and of acquainting him with my sentiments of the ancients, I answered him with energy.

"You speak of Demosthenes and Cicero! I will not take them for my guides: the worship which is paid to the ancients savours on superstition, and I am not idolatrously attached to them. Modern eloquence is also deserving of altars, and, perhaps, merits the preference."

"What is Demosthenes? A man in convulsions; an orator proposterous in every sense of the word, who gulls the people by his violent expressions, and by means of exaggeration obtains their applause. Cicero was a little more reasonable; that is, he was less fiery: his eloquence is almost throughout musical: it consists of studied phrases, and, consequently, smoothly turned; of choice syllables ending in *e*, sometimes in *um*: there is a harmony in it that pleases the ear, while the heart remains cold and unaffected. Did Cicero ever draw forth a tear? It must be allowed that he is a profound reasoner; a great logician; but an orator is something very different. It is true that he pleads before the senate, and the senate is not the populace led by Demosthenes.

"Having, therefore, more difficulties to overcome, he required more art than the other. For this reason he was consummate in his mode of employing, as there might be occasion, his flowers of rhetoric. He interluded them in his orations, as an embroiderer in her work. To please by variety, to avoid all that could shock nice minds, to charm and mislead: such is the aim of Cicero. He speaks to the eyes, Demosthenes to the ear, two very dangerous talents; but they do not form an orator. If the oratorical art were confined to that, the embroiderer, without knowing how to read or write, might, by chance, obtain the superiority."

While I was speaking to this effect, my uncle distorted his features, shrugged up his shoulders, and seemed little satisfied with my opinion.

"I see," said he, "that you have been tampered with by proselyte of the new school. You are the first that I have heard declaim against the ancients, and it can only be because you are too young to appreciate them at their real worth. Nevertheless, the old style is more in vogue

than ever : it is affected in every thing : your people of quality cannot close their eyes except they lay on a Greek bed."

"That may be suitable enough to old women, who would vainly strive to shine in the modern, but who, in the bottom of their hearts, are grievously enraged to find themselves, in spite of all the auxiliaries of art, always ranked among the ancients. Trust me, Sir, they are dying to be in the fashion, that is, modernized."

"An evasive answer, and highly worthy of your inexperience."

As I saw that my uncle began to take things seriously, and that, circumstanced as I was, open rebellion would ruin, I gave way by degrees to his opinion, like a crafty child that caresses his nurse, when he finds he cannot bide her ; and I listened to his harangue.

MY UNCLE'S HARANGUE.

*The Judge to the Members composing the Court of
the District of Palaise.*

GENTLEMEN,

"When, during nine months of the year, the pupil of Themis has night and day devoted himself to the labours of his profession, his head, like an ardent furnace, burning without consuming, feels a want of repose. It resembles those famous reptiles whose element was fire ; or those celebrated personages who, in the midst of devouring flames, were as much at their ease as if they had been stretched on beds of down : a striking image of your situation, which, however, would conclude by reducing you to annihilation, were it not for the periodical arrival of the vacation, no less necessary to your minds than the aliments which support their fragile envelop.

"Come, then, moment so ardently desired ! Magistrates, quit your robes, your studies, your books, those somniferous papers, the solicitors, and the noisy declamation of the bar, come, and listen to the warbling of the feathered race, that flocks from all the corners of the earth to invite you to repose and pleasure

"Methinks I see you, like children, whose candour and

innocence you doubtless possess, pacing your gardens with the strides of a giant, cultivating them, clearing them of destructive insects, pruning with taste the branches of your trees, and, provided with a fit instrument, skilfully managed, covering your walls with verdant foliage that Pomona adorns with her gifts of purple and rosy hue, inviting the eye to contemplate, the hand to gather, and the mouth to taste them.

"What a delicious picture would that be which should represent, on one side, the magistrate clad as a shepherd, sporting in the midst of fruits and flowers, and enjoying the amusements of innocence under cover of the shady grove. On the other, Chicane in a state of fury, tearing his hair to prevent him from being seized and overthrown.

"Vain contrivance! the magistrate smiling, seems to say: 'This is not the field of combat, abominable monster, more terrible than those that existed in the burning sands of Africa, or in the fantastic imagination of the poets, fear the balance of Themis; the sounds produced by the concussion of her scales, shall be to thine ear more dreadful than cannon or thunder.' At these words, Chicane alarmed, weeping with rage to see all the inhabitants of the earth, of the air, and the waters, running, bounding, swimming, and flying, becomes eager to concur to the pleasure of his adversaries, and voluntarily sacrifices himself to expiate his former guilty conduct.

"What a ravishing picture, gentlemen! Worthy of the pencil of Poussin, were he alive! with what striking features would he paint the wrath of Chicane! Why have I not myself the lungs of Stentor to give you an idea of the discordant cries, the yells which he utters—? But let us leave these gloomy descriptions, to trace the delights of innocence and tranquillity, the pleasures of early youth: ah! why does not that return with them!

"More diligent than the early dawn, the magistrate in his morning dress has already traversed the plains, enamelled with the humid breath of Aurora; already her tears have penetrated to his feet, already the perfidious gin has enchained the inhabitants of the air, who from sleep have passed to slavery, the slavery of death, and tranquilly repose in the nets of the unfeeling sportsman.

"Thus the magistrate passes the day in his umbrageous retreat, as intent upon his diversion as he was vigilant in his duty. Before the sun's departure he lays new snares

for the sylvan inhabitants ; he sings the rustic air, and at the sound of his voice the plumed tribes are attracted by curiosity of which they presently become victims.

" Sometimes in the middle of a thick bush he places a trap artfully constructed ; sometimes with the agility of the squirrel he springs to the summit of a tree, disposes his lime-twigs, and spreads them on the boughs most likely to ensnare the game. He perceives the sun which can afford him but half an hour's light to pursue his pleasures.

" Peace ! silence ! Gentlemen, hold your breath.—The critical moment is arrived that summons the vocal band to their leafy shades, and eagerly perching on the glutinous twig, they fall one upon another : their various cries announcing their distress, form the most inharmonious concert, and, shrill and piercing resounds in the forest, like the sobs and bewailings of the besieged in a town taken by assault : strange spectacle, that thus resembles in miniature the horrors of war !

" The magistrate quits his concealment, and darts upon them even as a vulture : he takes them by handful, and without vouchsafing them a hearing or giving them a trial, they undergo the irrevocable sentence. The jay, the pie, gossiping like a verbose advocate ; the owl, whose claw resembles the hand of an avaricious attorney ; the woodpecker, who counts the blows with which he strikes the tree he selects, as a scrivener the words of a roll of parchment,—all fall beneath his hand ; after which, he returns to his hiding-place, to perform the last act of this diverting tragedy : I hear the bird call—counterfeiting the note of the merlin : the wild thrush and the cunning black-bird, unite to resist the attack of the common enemy, and, falling into the snare prepared for them by the active magistrate, they augment his capture, his triumph and glory.

" As a recompense for his toil, he hastily sets apart sufficient to furnish him an excellent repast : the different dishes being seasoned by hunger, are delicious, and disappear like lightning, as soon as they are brought forward : he quenches his thirst by long and repeated draughts ; the dessert arrives, he would speak, relate his exploits, but he can only bring out a few unconnected words ; fatigue has enchained his tongue, Morpheus does the same by his senses, and, without perceiving it, he sinks into the arms of sleep.

"Meanwhile, Vertumnus expires, struck by the chilling blasts, the precursors of winter. The meadows, clothed with a robe of silver at the appearance of the tardy and idle Aurora, announce the termination of his pleasures. Adieu, the woods and the plains! adieu, the pipe and the shepherd! Quitting his crown of ivy and the vine, I now behold the magistrate covered with glory and laurels, seated on the throne of Themis; seized with respect and admiration, I hold my peace, and my silence evinces that I have done. *Dixi.*"

It was high time, for, like the fatigued magistrate, I was about to sink into the arms of Morpheus.

"Well!" said my uncle, "your opinion on this trifle?"

"Sublime!" I had comprehended scarcely the third of it: "I distinguished passages of Homer, Virgil and Horace in it."

"You mean," returned my uncle, "passages worthy of those great men?"

"That is what I intended to say; and I confess that my prejudice against the ancients is weakened."

The chapter of the ancients appeared inexhaustible: we were still on the subject, when an elderly lady, covered with rouge and diamonds, entered the room. At the sight of her, my antipathy to the ancients revived, and carried me so far as to make me neglect the usual forms of politeness. My uncle took notice of my ill manners; for he said to me with a look of dissatisfaction: "What are you thinking of, Sir! make your bow to Madame de Courtonasi."

Abashed at this reprimand, I bowed, and looked so ridiculously, that the lady took pity of me, and gave me a pat on the cheek to encourage me.

"Is this your nephew?" added she, addressing herself to my uncle.

"Yes, madam," replied he; "a pedantical booby totally without polish."

"He will be polished in time, depend on it, Sir;—your age, young gentleman!"

"Eighteen, madam."

"Eighteen!—Heavens! what make and shape!—Why, my dear sir, he is absolutely a man."

At this exclamation of the lady, I was unable to contain myself, and ran out of the room bursting into a loud laugh. I know not whether my uncle apologized for my rudeness, but the following day, and whenever I saw Madame de

Courteous again, far from reproaching me, she treated me in the kindest manner ; by which I was so much tickled, that I abandoned my cheeks to her shrivelled hand, which honoured them now and then with a gentle tap as further proofs of her partiality. The time of my pretended holiday was on the point of expiring, and I had not yet provided for the fatal epoch, when, standing at the door of my uncle's house, I saw advancing towards me, a man with a packet of letters in his hand.

"Pray, does not M. Pélissier live here ?" said he to me, taking out one from the packet.

"Yes, I am his nephew," replied I.

"Is your uncle at home, Sir ?"

"He is."

"I am in great haste, Sir ; I have several miles to go : will you be kind enough to deliver him this letter ?"

"Willingly : does it require any answer ?"

"I will call for it in the evening as I return."

The messenger continued his road, while I, chancing to cast my eyes on the direction of the letter, was seized with a sudden trembling, on discovering it to be in my father's hand-writing.

"There can be no doubt," said I to myself, "but that this letter contains my doom. If I give it to my uncle, he will be informed of my pranks, he will be offended at the falsity I had told him, and I shall lose his friendship, as well as being shamefully turned out of his doors. Before my cousins too ! This affront would be insupportable : I could never submit to it."

All the while I was making these reflections, I was walking further and further from the house ; I turned the letter over and over, and examined whether there was no mode of discovering the contents without breaking the seal ; but finding none, no sooner was I arrived in a place of safety, that is to say, at too great a distance to be perceived, than I opened the fatal billet.—It was to the following effect :

"My dear brother,

This is to inform you that Luke has left college without the permission of his master. He is gone off, and nobody knows what is become of him. As you have always given him a kind reception, perhaps he has chosen your house as a place of refuge, and deceived you by some plausible falsehood. Should it be so, his conduct must, doubt-

less, excite your anger, as his flight has already done mine. In the name of the interest that you have always taken in what concerns my family, if you have granted my son an asylum, restore him, instantly you receive this, to a sense of his duty and his fault : should he prove deaf to your admonition, employ force to bring him to submission, and let him be sent back to the college, bound hand and foot, and properly guarded. I expect this service from your known friendship.

MACAIRE HUGUES VERAC."

"Bound hand and foot !" cried I, tearing the letter into a thousand pieces, and precipitately taking to my heels ; but suddenly stopped, upon recollecting the abruptness of such a proceeding. What was to hinder me at least from bidding adieu to my uncle and cousins ?—nothing. The messenger was not to return till the evening, for an answer to the letter he had brought.

This reflection induced me to take the road back to the house : I entered it, considerably agitated, though I did my utmost to appear tranquil ; and was about to take leave of my uncle and his charming daughters, when he said to me : "Luke, where have you been ? A parcel has been brought for you in your absence." "For me !" "Yes, it comes from your father : I fancy it is a coat and some linen he has sent you. Go and see : they have been put in your room."

I answered not a word ; I had not the power to speak ; but proceeded to my chamber, apprehending that my uncle had been apprized of my evasion, and had taken this step to secure me. There was, however, a parcel upon my drawers, which I hastened to open, and find out what it contained.

Could I believe my eyes ? Who could have made me such presents ?—a scarlet coat, edged with a narrow gold lace, waistcoat, breeches and stockings of silk ; a shirt with laced frill and ruffles ; knee-buckles, shoe-buckles, stock-buckle, all of silver ; muslin neckcloth, cambric pocket-handkerchief, a cocked hat, in the first style of fashion, and pumps of goat's leather : nothing was wanting to this charming dress, but the addition of a sword, to make me be taken for a nobleman.

While beholding with extreme joy these superb articles, I could not believe they were intended for me. "It must

be a mistake," said I to myself : "my father is incapable of such generosity ; he who inhumanly desired I might be sent back to Falaise, bound hand and foot."

As I was opening one of the handkerchiefs to admire the fineness, I observed a note drop out of it which I caught up with eagerness, and on opening it, discovered the solution of the enigma. It was as follows :

"Unfortunate young man——

(What am I to expect from this beginning ? thought I.)

"I am a woman, and naturally compassionate : I have not been able to hear a recital of your misfortunes, without being greatly affected.

('My misfortunes !'—I looked at the back of the letter, still uncertain whether it was addressed to me. It was directed to *The little Scholar of Falaise College*. The words *little scholar* rather mortified me, and I read the remainder of the letter with less pleasure.)

"I cannot conceive that you intend to return to college, which you have quitted without permission. You are young, inexperienced, and will soon be friendless ; for you must not calculate on your uncle's protection after he shall have been informed of the cause of your visit. Humanity, therefore, imposes it on me as a duty to take you under my care.

"Follow the plan I am about to trace out to you, if you would escape the misery that otherwise awaits you. Repair to Paris as speedily as possible : the parcel that I send you with this, by a hand on which I can rely, will enable you to appear in a suitable manner, by setting off your figure and your understanding.

"You will take up your residence at the *Hotel de Normandie, rue de Bretagne*, and stay there until you are made acquainted with the person who interests herself in your destiny, and to whom you will one day owe your advancement. From the step I have already taken, a step which to any other than yourself might seem imprudent, I have reason to depend on your delicacy and your silence. My future favour shall be proportioned to your discretion. Yes, or no, is the only answer required from you. An elderly woman will be waiting at seven o'clock this evening, by the willows, near your uncle's gate : you may confide to her the billet containing your decision. Fidelity, sincerity, constancy, and truth."

No signature ! I remained a moment, amazed, petrified with what had befallen me : recovering, however, from this sort of lethargy, I blessed again and again the short straw, and without knowing to whom I was obligated, I hastily wrote the following reply :

" Adorable and adored woman, tutelar divinity, guardian angel, *yes*, I abandon my destiny to your fostering protection : *yes*, you shall be to me the divine fire that the son of Iapetus and Asia stole from Jupiter to animate mankind. But, alas ! why conceal from me the beneficent hand which has poured the healing balm on the wounds of my heart !

" Yet, however great the relief you have kindly administered, it is still afflicted, though with a pain that it will willingly support while it exists. Heavens ! what length of time is destined to elapse before I am made acquainted with the Minerva who has shielded me with her eagle ! Whoever you are, goddess or mortal, I will follow you to the utmost limits of the earth : I will borrow the wings of Icarus, to reach you in Olympus, or the voice of Orpheus, to snatch you from the realms of Pluto. I will this instant set off, and by the end of the week I shall be at the *Hotel de Normandie*.

MARC, LUKE, ROC, LOUP, CLOUD, VERAC."

It was only two o'clock in the afternoon when I had finished this billet, and I should not be able to dispatch it till the evening : my father's messenger was also to call again in the evening, and it became necessary for me to arrange my batteries accordingly. However, before I began my journey, I longed to shew myself to my cousins in my new clothes, and to prove to them how much a man is indebted to his dress.

In consequence, without loss of time, I set about the alteration. Alas ! I was presently convinced that if the present were intended for me, I had never been taken measure of, and that somebody else had already had the honour to wear the gorgeous apparel. The silk stockings were so short and small, that I was unable to get them on without opening them at the toes, and ripping a part of the seam, besides which, I pulled them into several holes.

The pumps pinched my feet so as almost to prevent me from standing upright : the breeches did not reach to my knees : fortunately, the waistcoat had more length than fulness ; and I remedied the latter defect by letting it out

behind with my knife ; but when I came to put on the scarlet coat, my face assumed the colour of the cloth : the cuffs were at least six inches above my wrists, and the skirts extended not more than half way down my thighs. I tried for some time in vain to put a handkerchief into my pocket, and could not effect it, at least, without making the most violent contortions and risking the fracture of a rib : as to my cocked hat, I was obliged to carry it under my arm, it being too small in the crown to stick on my head anyhow.

I was in this situation, suffering martyrdom, undecided whether I should not resume the clothes which had passed through the cleansing hands of Jeanneton, when a servant came to tell me dinner was on table. I had to go down stairs to reach the dining-room, and I was little less than a quarter of an hour in getting there, so much caution was necessary to prevent me from breaking my neck.

At every step I took, my glossy pump turned as if it had been on a pivot, and my breeches cracked in a terrifying manner. This torment was not the only one I had to undergo : I experienced one much greater upon appearing before my cousins. I, however, had the fortitude to join them in their laughter : but O, ye powers ! what a laugh was mine ! I should have preferred being in the belly of a whale.

" You are very smart," said my uncle, making signs to his daughters not to ridicule me.

" I was desirous of surprising you, uncle, and I have succeeded better than I intended ; since I am surprised myself with my finery ; my father must have made a mistake, and sent me things belonging to one of my younger brothers."

My shame was not yet over. Till then, I had continued standing, and had not foreseen the difficulties I should have in sitting down. What was my situation, when, endeavouring to place myself in a chair, I heard a dreadful rent, and saw my handsome silk breeches give way in such a manner as to put me much more at my ease than I desired to be. This last accident confounded me entirely. I rose from the table, and using my napkin as a petticoat, I so rapidly regained my chamber, that I heard not the bursts of laughter which involuntarily escaped my cousins, and even my grave uncle himself. The latter, finding I did not return to dinner, sent it up stairs : I ate not from appetite, but

merely from precaution, ignorant in what quarters I should have to pass the night.

Thus, after having put my stomach into a state to support a three days' fast, and replaced the silk breeches by those which Jeanneton had washed for me, I directed my steps to the spot which had been pointed out by my unknown correspondent, where, being arrived, I waited until night should cover me with her mantle. Oh, night ! Shall I in this place make to thee an invocation ? Alas ! of what service would it be to me to borrow the pencils of Tasso or Delille ? It is not an amorous spark that thy veil is about to protect, but the flight of a miserable scholar, already suffering sufficient restraint.

The history of the breeches had cast such a gloom on my ideas, that on the appearance of the old woman, I hesitated some time whether I should deliver her my answer to the tender epistle I had received. The hope of advancement however decided me : I accosted the messenger, and showed her my letter : she seized it without saying a word, and disappeared in an instant. After which, turning towards the road leading from my uncle's, I cried : "The die is cast," and set off at a brisk pace.

I walked for two hours at least, and not meeting with any habitation, I began to think my lodging would be in the open air, when the sight of a wretched inn dissipated my fears, and induced me to halt. I knocked for about twenty minutes at the door before any one answered me : at length, a voice asked me what I wanted.

"A bed," said I.

"We have no beds here."

"A handful of straw will do, so as I can be sheltered from the cold that pierces me to the bones."

"Turn to the right, into the yard : you will find the stable at the lower end."

"I thank you."

"Good night."

I accordingly entered the yard, and opened a door at the lower end. "This is not the stable," cried I, stopping my nose : I opened another, several trusses of hay convinced me I was right, and I threw myself down, little troubled about the morrow.

The next morning, on awaking at day-break, I could not help laughing on contemplating the miserable hole in which I had enjoyed such an excellent sleep, and thinking of

Mademoiselle Augustina Maurille, to whom I had promised a husband and a portion, I shook my feathers, and was about to proceed in my journey ; but my swelled feet would not enter again the pumps that I had taken the precaution to pull off before laying down, and I was therefore obliged to travel barefoot, until I should be able to accommodate myself better.

I passed the second night in an excellent inn : a good supper, good wine, and a good bed conspired to recover me from my fatigue ; but, when the moment came to reckon with my host, I was forced to confess that I had not a *sous*. "However," added I, "here is a pair of silver buckles : find me an honest man who will purchase them, and I will pay you."

A jew, who happened to be present at this conversation, took the buckles from me, weighed them in his hand, and offered me a *louis* for them. I was on the point of concluding the bargain, congratulating myself on having so readily met with such an honest man, when another man who was drinking at the next table, suddenly came up to us, examined me from head to foot, and taking the buckles from the hands of the jew : "Keep them," said he to me, returning them ; "Monsieur *Graindorge*, (that was the name of the innkeeper,) I will pay the gentleman's bill."

The host made a low bow, and the jew retired, grinding his teeth with vexation. I asked the stranger to what I was indebted for his kindness ? "Sit down," said he in the most friendly manner, "we shall soon scrape acquaintance." Accordingly, I took a seat beside him, not without feeling some anxiety : he forced me to drink, and after several toasts, he thus began the conversation :

"Sir, you are, doubtless, going to Paris ?"

"I am, Sir."

"It is the resort of all the learned, of all men of letters."

"And of all sorts of rogues, I have been told."

"There are of both kinds. But your physiognomy tells me that you will not increase the number of the latter."

"The physiognomy is frequently deceitful."

"I know it ; nothing so strongly resembles an honest man as a knave. But the jew that offered you a *louis* for your buckles has not a deceitful face : it may be seen what he is in a moment. And you, sir, I pretty well guess what you are."

"Deign, sir, to explain yourself."

"Sir, whatever you may think of me, I have read a good deal in my time."

"I do not doubt it, Sir."

"The reading of good works, forms the taste and sharpens the discernment. For example, I have seen both in history and romances a thousand portraits of poets : they are all of the same colour. So that I am certain of not being mistaken : I can smell a poet a hundred miles off."

"What is the motive of this pleasantry ?"

"The motive ! You shall know ; I am the steward of an old baron, whose *chateau* is at a little distance from hence ; his daughter is to be married to-day, to a young man who is to become a financier, and who, we are told, will have a considerable fortune. The father-in-law, enchanted with the match, is desirous of celebrating it suitably. All the musicians about the country are invited. To complete the festival, we want only a poet who may enliven the guests by the gaiety of his songs. I had a friend at Falaise on whom I depended : he was much esteemed in the place as a singer, the clerk of Monsieur Grouard, the attorney ; but I know not what has happened between him and his master——"

"Yesterday, expecting to find my young friend in his office, I saw there the lawyer's wife in tears, and the husband raving about something or other like a madman. Whatever it was, it did not concern me ; I do not meddle with other people's affairs, but I understood the singer was set off for Caen ; and, after the promise I had made to Monsieur the baron, I was a good deal embarrassed. In my way back, I stopped here to take some refreshment ; my whiskey is all ready, and we will, if you please, depart instantly."

"I conclude from what you say, that you take me for a poet."

"It was impossible I should be deceived. Your ingenious manner—your animated countenance—your eyes full of fire ; and then, between ourselves be it said, your travelling on foot, without money.—Hah ! Confess that poets seldom travel otherwise. *Quia tecum porto*, said Alcibiades or Socrates, I forget which, that journeyed in the same way. In my youth I understood Latin, I even made sonnets in the style of *Desbarreaux* ; but since I have applied myself to agriculture, and have the management of five or six farms, I can only be compared to the shepherd

Orrydon—Orrydon arbedat Aleris. One becomes rustic in the country, and loses by degrees one's genius and imagination. *Tytyre tu patula recubans sub tegmine fagi.* O! here is the whiskey: step in, sir."

"But, sir——"

"Step in, I say, you will be welcome at my lord the baron's *chateau*, I will answer for it.—He has not the honour of receiving a poet every day at his table: he will owe the pleasure of your acquaintance to me."

Perceiving that the steward would take no denial, I mounted his whiskey, and to convince him of the infallibility of his judgment, I recited with emphasis several verses that occurred to my memory.

"Ah, ah!" exclaimed this original, enchanted at the specimen I gave him of my talents; "do I understand physiognomy or not? Gee up!" added he, applying the whip to his horse, who, knowing he was going home, willingly increased his pace; and to some purpose, for one of the wheels, unable from age and long use to bear the repeated shocks it received from the rough road by this increased velocity, flew into shivers. The carriage was overturned together with us into a ditch; the steward, who happened to be uppermost, almost crushed me by the weight of his body; yet kept crying out and groaning as if he had broken a limb or two at least.

Though I suffered much more than he, I contented myself with cursing the frail car and my officious *Maccenas*. When we came to ascertain the injury we had received, we found it was confined to slight contusions, and being assured that we were safe and sound in other respects, we unharnessed the horse and proceeded on our journey, alternately riding and walking, our steed not having been accustomed to carry double: the fractured vehicle we left in the care of a peasant who chanced to be passing, and who was known to the steward.

We had still four leagues to go, and as the equestrian could only keep pace with the pedestrian, our progress was necessarily tardy. We at length, however, arrived at the *chateau*, when my conductor had the misfortune to find that the nuptial benediction had been given in his absence, and that the company were just about to sit down to table.

He excused himself as well as he could to the baron, relating the accident which had occasioned his delay, and presented me as the young man whose talents he had so

highly boasted of to his master : after which, leaving me with the baron, he went among the servants to give his orders, and preside at the preparations for the entertainment.

I asked his lordship's permission to pay my respects to the new bride : he ushered me into her presence : she was pretty ; her countenance announced a good understanding. I stammered out a compliment, which, although it wanted common sense, was thought sublime ; so much had every one been prepossessed in my favour.

The guests whispered one another, and beheld me with a sort of respect : I even heard an elderly woman say to another next her, he is a poet. This word passed from mouth to mouth ; I blushed, which was attributed to my modesty ; the bell gave notice that dinner was ready, and happily released me from this embarrassing situation.

I will not say the number of dishes that covered the table ; perhaps, indeed, I should vainly have attempted to count them : the wine went briskly round ; the baron set the example, and the company were not slow to follow it. I retired when the dessert was brought in : my evasion was perceived, but no one would seem to observe it. Every one concluded, that at my return I should produce a *dis* of my own composition.

In truth, my motive for leaving the room was to stroll into the park, and patch up a few verses, which were indispensable, considering the expectation that had been formed of my abilities. They did not wait long for my re-appearance : I happened to be in the vein, and, self-love apart, I considered my production as passable. I returned with an air of satisfaction and triumph, which presently fled, when going to resume my place, I found it occupied——by whom ? by Madame de Courtonasi. If I was astonished at this meeting, she appeared equally so. The familiarity with which she addressed me increased the consideration I had previously acquired. I every moment dreaded lest she should expose me ; but it will be seen by the sequel that she had her reasons for behaving with circumspection.

Our conversation turned upon indifferent subjects : I learned that she was an old friend of the baron's, and that as she was leaving the country for some time, she could not pass his house without calling to congratulate him on his daughter's establishment. "And you," said she to me in a low voice, "what are you doing here ?"

"I am exercising a profession which I never dreamed of till this morning : that of poet."

"We shall see how you will acquit yourself."

At this moment, I was pressed to sing. I made several difficulties ; such as a slight cold, the weakness of my voice, and a thousand others in use upon the like occasions : the entreaties were, however, persisted in, and I sung to a favourite air what I had been composing, but which I have not the vanity to think deserving of insertion in this place.

My song was allowed to be *monstrous* pretty, *vastly* gay, and *wonderfully* well sung : I was overwhelmed with praises, the toast went round, and the steward, swelling like the frog that fancied himself an ox, was incessantly whispering the baron : "My lord, I am a connoisseur in poets."

My head till then had been so wholly occupied by my verses, that I had paid little attention to the numerous audience before whom I had essayed my muse ; in a word, I had not perceived the treasure by my side.

"Your song is charming, sir," said a voice as sweet as it was timid : "if I did not think I should be imprudent, I would beg the favour of a copy of it."

I appeared to awake from a dream : I turned my eyes to discover from whom these celestial sounds had proceeded. What did I see !—What a shape ! what beauty ! what a mien ! what grace !—And such a combination of charms had been so long overlooked by me !

"Ah, Mademoiselle !" answered I, blushing like a school-boy as I was, "how much better should I have been inspired if——."

I found that I was about to talk nonsense, and therefore stopped short with my compliment. My prudence was not lost upon the young lady : she smiled, and added, not less to my satisfaction than to my astonishment, that since I was acquainted with her aunt, (pointing out Madame de Courtonasi) I might deliver the copy she requested to her.

I was going to commit a second piece of folly, by quitting the table for the purpose of instantly making this dear copy, when a little man dressed in black, and his head shrouded by an enormous peruke powdered like a bishop's, detained me by the arm, told me that he also had composed a song, and that he was happy in an opportunity of giving it to the company, in the hearing of such a judge as myself. I feared that it would surpass mine, and deprive me of the

suffrage of the amiable Amelina, the name of the young beauty who had condescended to applaud my essay.

However, it was necessary to conceal my vexation, and to oppose fortitude to fortune : I even pressed my brother poet to favour us with a specimen of his talents. The assembly that had listened to me with the greatest pleasure, had not so much complaisance for my rival. He had gone through three or four verses by way of exordium only, when a servant came in to say the musicians were ready in the ball-room. The company rose spontaneously, and hastened out of the apartment, crying, *When the fiddles play, dance away.*

For me, perfectly at ease as soon as I had heard my fellow-candidate begin, I should have willingly wished him to sing for a couple of hours ; for I had found means to engage the lovely Amelina in an interesting conversation ; and I had many things to say, still more to hear, when we were thus obliged to separate. I had, however, learned sufficient to give birth to a hope as tender as it was flattering.

Amelina de Vaudoncour had lost her parents, and with them, a great part of her fortune : there was hardly enough to pay the pension of a convent into which her aunt was desirous she should enter, but where she had no predilection to be buried alive in the bloom of youth.

"To wean the aunt from her cruel purpose is a bold enterprise," said I to myself ; "it is, however, to me, perhaps, that the honour of bringing it about is reserved. My efforts will not displease Amelina ; and who knows that her hand may not one day be the reward of my labours ! Madame de Courtonasi is conducting her niece to Paris : I also am going to the capital : courage ! the aspect of circumstances is too favourable to be neglected ; at least, an attempt is well worth making."

This resolution being taken, I sketched out my plan on the spot, and joining Madame de Courtonasi, bade her adieu.

"Are you going to your father's ?" said she, giving me a look of anxiety.

"No, madam ; I am expected at Paris, and the fear of being kept here longer, determines me to depart without taking leave of my lord the baron."

"You are quite in the right," replied she, suddenly as-

suming an air of gaiety and satisfaction ; "you are here among strangers, who treat you with distinction to-day, and who may importune you to-morrow : it is better they should regret your loss than grow tired of your company ; and I am so much of that opinion in regard to myself, that I and my niece are going to set off directly. Pray, young man, how do you travel ?"

"On foot, madam."

"On foot !—poor fellow !"

Madame de Courtonasi held her tongue, but sighed profoundly. I flattered myself she was about to offer me a place in her carriage, but I was deceived : I assured her of my respect, and I left her pretending to shed tears.

The idea of seeing Amelina again in Paris, gave me unusual strength and activity. I ran as if a mile had been the extent of my journey : but, scarcely had I got clear of the village, when I heard somebody behind calling out to me to stop. On looking round, I perceived the steward mounted on an ass, which he was belabouring with all his might, in the hope of being able to overtake me. This he effected, because I halted, when he employed all his eloquence to induce me to return to the *chateau*. I was proof against his persuasion.

"In that case," added he, "you will accept this slight mark of acknowledgment that my lord the baron has desired me to deliver to you. These twenty-five *louis* will keep you from having recourse to any more jews to supply your wants on the road."

"Money !" cried I with pride and dignity : "his lordship does not know me : I cannot suffer him to pay so dearly for such a trifle."

"What will you then accept ?"

"His friendship and yours."

"Young man ! these sentiments do you honour : you will prosper, depend upon it : I predict your advancement. *Auri sacra fames* ! every one would not be so scrupulous. I will carry back your answer to my lord the baron ; and I can venture to assure you beforehand, that in whatever circumstances you may find yourself, he will afford you his protection. Farewell : a good journey." So saying, the steward mounted his nag, and I continued my road.

"I am satisfied with my behaviour," said I ; "but I

would willingly give all that I am worth, for Amelina to be acquainted with my disinterestedness."

It will be imagined that I reached the metropolis on foot : no such thing ; that mode of travelling terminated with the first post. A berlin drove up and stopped there to change horses ; I approached the carriage to observe whom it might contain, and remained immoveable at the sight of Madame de Courtonasi and her charming niece. Providence or Love ! to which of you do I owe this fortunate accident ? Amelina seemed as much struck as myself at our meeting ; but, her aunt observing me silent as the god *Terminus*, presently drew me out of my ecstasy.

"Come hither," said she, holding out her hand : "we were looking out for you."

"Me, madam !"

"Yes ;—Poets are seldom treated with respect, and others maliciously notice that they always travel on foot : I am desirous of avenging the honour of the whole body, by taking you to Paris in my berlin. It may be easily supposed I did not wait for a repetition of this invitation : I was presently seated between Amelina and the indulgent lady. The carriage set off at a great speed, and in twenty-two hours, we arrived at the abode of the *great family*.

Delightful journey ! why could I not make the tour of the globe in the same manner ? Amelina, young and innocent, had never yet seen the metropolis, and the various objects of attraction and seduction it contains. Brought up in a retired part of a distant province, my dress had not appeared ridiculous to her, nor my address awkward. She had considered my song a master-piece, because she had heard nothing better in all Normandy : she looked upon me, in short, as a prodigy of wit and understanding, because she had never listened to the jargon of your young men of fashion. But now she is in Paris, in that city where all is sublime, *incredible*, I had just reason to fear the comparison she would not fail to make.

"Alas !" repeated I from time to time, "did Amelina but know of my recent disinterestedness, she would judge me under a point of view less brilliant, perhaps, but certainly not less favourable. She would esteem the qualities of the heart alone, and even at Paris, I should no longer apprehend anything on the score of comparison.

Madame de Courtonasi conducted me to the *Hotel de Normandie*, where I had told her I was to go ; but my joy,

my transports can hardly be conceived, when I saw the dear aunt herself alight there with Amelina; when I heard her order an apartment for them and for me, whom she called her relation; and when I felt Amelina press my hand to testify her satisfaction at this unexpected arrangement.

"Lucky short straw!" cried I to myself once more, "it is to thee all this good fortune is owing. And you, charming Augustina Maurille! you who decided my destiny, you shall not long wait either for a portion or a husband."

A little circumstance added to my felicity. Madame de Courtonasi received a letter from the old baron at whose *chateau* I had performed so conspicuous a part, in which he spoke of me in the most honourable terms, and mentioned my noble refusal of his offer of twenty-five *louis* with which he had *inconsiderably* thought of repaying the pleasure he had received from my company.

"But," continued the lady, who appeared enchanted at this proof of my delicacy, "he is unwilling to be outdone in generosity. The baron is acquainted with your situation, and has requested me, in case I should meet with you in Paris, to advance you the sum of a thousand crowns, (I protested against accepting this second offer), as a loan only for present service: it would now be impolite to refuse him: you may repay him when the state of your affairs shall put it in your power."

On that condition I accepted it, Amelina herself having pressed me not to run the risk of offending the baron, whose disposition was as irritable as it was generous.

A thousand crowns! from possessing literally nothing, I suddenly became master of a thousand crowns! I sent for tailors and tradesmen of all sorts, who did not cheat me of a *doit*; I set up a wardrobe, I acquired the Parisian customs and the *bon ton*; I was presently introduced in all societies, I learned to dance the newest steps, and made verses on the pretty women; the pretty women extolled my talents, and all the *Lycees* were desirous of enrolling my name as a member. I frequented the theatres, I judged pieces without hearing them, I spoke of music without knowing the *gamut*, and boldly declaimed against *Huck* and *Gretry*. Their works will never descend to posterity, cried a crowd of *petits maitres*, who passed their time in ogling the actresses; at which I could not avoid saying to myself; "These fellows are certainly branches of *my family*."

Oh ! what a number of relations shall I find in this good city of Paris ! every street-corner plastered with yellow, green, red or blue, paints out the abodes of my brothers and cousins. Two thousand doctors announce two thousand different remedies for the same malady. Six hundred booksellers advertise six hundred new works, novels, romances, poetry, dramas,—all of the most alluring titles, (such, for instance, as *The Lying Family*,) and each of these works possesses an originality, an interest, a style which cannot fail to amuse, affect or charm the reader ; nevertheless, upon paying a visit to several of my cousins the booksellers, I do not find one that does not complain of the badness of trade, and of [the impudence of authors who impose their trash upon them.

I also went to see my cousins the proprietors of lotteries. They were all provided with what is necessary to tempt, seduce and beggar their customers. Their signs were ornamented with ribbons, and heaps of gold issuing from imaginary horns of plenty, forcing the eye to contemplation, the heart to desire.

I saw men clothed in rags, bring thither the fruits of their labour, what they had literally earned by the sweat of their brows, and fall lifeless with want at the side of the horn of plenty. I saw rich individuals, already the favourites of fortune, venture considerable sums in hard cash, in exchange for the bare possibility of being still richer ; and a thousand others of the same stamp, stake their fortunes on the strength of the nocturnal wanderings of their empty heads. Yet, will it be believed ? while I pitied these madmen, I imitated their example, I put my hand in the wheel, and drawing out the numbers 2, 20, and 22, I paid for my chances, and carefully put the ticket in my pocket-book.

A thousand brilliant chimeras filled my imagination until the time of drawing : on the numbers I had chosen, or rather which fortune had presented me, depended the husband and portion of Augustina Maurille. I carried the treasure to the feet of Amelina, who loved me without treasure : I advanced in the world, was surrounded by the glare of luxury : I obtained places, rank, dignities, honours, consideration, the esteem of the rich, the benedictions of the poor, and, in short, I was the happiest man alive.

While thus buoyed up by illusion, my thousand crowns were not arrived at an end : I had not yet seen the bottom of the bag, as the saying goes, having still sufficient left to

procure me friends, that sort of friends whose friendship is as solid as the remedies of my cousins the doctors were efficacious, and as the publications of my cousins the booksellers were amusing.

One day, I suffered myself to be conducted by them to the hazard table. First miracle ! my friends were ruined, and I ruined the bank. My friends were enraged : three of them talked of blowing their brains out : for me, I quitted the den, smiling at my success, (I was gainer eleven thousand francs,) and promising never to tempt fortune again in the same way. I have kept my promise, that is one truth ; I have forsaken the society of my friends the gamblers, that is another ; and I congratulate myself every night as I go to bed upon these two resolutions.

I was at once proud and ashamed of my riches ; ashamed of the source from whence they had sprung, proud of having triumphed at the expense of such *virtuous* characters. Now, being unable to impart my joys to Amelina without at the same time confessing to her the cause, or rather the means by which it had arisen, I kept wholly silent on the subject ; and placing my 11,000 francs in the *Mont-de-Piété*, I secured a small income for old age, although I was then but nineteen.

Two months had elapsed since my arrival at the *Hotel de Normandie* : I had, during that space, made considerable progress in the heart of Amelina, her aunt overwhelmed me with kindness, the convent which was to deprive me for ever of the dearest object of my thoughts had not been mentioned : I flattered myself that Madame de Courtonasi, suspecting my sentiments for her niece, was not dissatisfied with our attachment, and only waited till time and my prudent conduct should justify her approbation, to consent to our union.

One morning, reflecting on my situation, on my love, and on the silence so long preserved by the person who had written me the anonymous letter, I was recapitulating all my means of attack and defence, when Madame de Courtonasi entered my chamber, took a seat by my side, and said to me with an air of seriousness which terrified me :

" My young friend, I have something of the greatest importance to reveal to you : I wish to know your sentiments on a certain point, and your happiness depends on your sincerity." I remained mute with surprise and apprehension. She continued :

"Luke, you have never spoken to me of a letter which you received while at your uncle's, and in which you were advised to come to Paris."

"Here it is, madam !" was my answer.

"And you have never suspected who was the writer of this letter ?"

"Never."

"Would you be glad to know the person who took such an interest in your fate ?"

"I should be happy in an opportunity of testifying my gratitude to her."

"Luke !" continued the lady in a tone the most tender and affecting she could assume, "she has observed that you possess a good heart and excellent qualities."

"She has judged me, madam, with a great deal of indulgence."

"You are more solid than young men of your age usually are."

"If so, madam, it is owing to your advice, as well as to your example."

"She loves you."

"Loves me !" interrupted I. "Ah ! madam, how delightful is this communication ! it transports me ! it elevates me above myself. I am beloved, and it is from your mouth I hear the rapturous tidings ; I, therefore, can no longer doubt of my happiness. Pardon me," continued I, falling on my knees and bathing her hands with my tears, "pardon me, madam, I have been culpable, extremely culpable, for having concealed from you the state of my heart, but it was respect, it was love itself that kept me silent."

"I will not blame this timidity ; on the contrary, it increases your claims to my friendship ; but rise, Luke, and listen coolly to what I have to say. I am a widow, free to dispose of my property as I please."

"What kindness, madam !"

"Your father is not rich, his large family puts it out of his power to provide for you as you deserve ; but I——."

"What kindness, madam !"

"But I, from the first moment I saw you, resolved to contribute to your establishment. It was I, who engaged you by an anonymous letter to repair to Paris, the place where real merit is distinguished."

"What kindness, madam !"

"It was I, who, informed of your noble proceeding re-

specting the offer of the baron de R—— my relation, made use of his name to force your acceptance of a small sum, by means of which you have been enabled to make a suitable appearance in company."

"What—what—kind—kindness,—madam!"

"What I have done, is trifling in comparison with what I still intend to do for you."

"What kindness, madam!"

"My niece enters a convent to-morrow."

"A convent!"

"The day following, I will execute a deed which shall convey all my property to you after my death."

"What kindness, madam!"

"You shall be my husband."

"What—kind—kindness, madam!"—(I was petrified.)

"You are young, very young: the world will blame my choice, I know it; but, to enjoy happiness, one must be above vulgar prejudices. I have informed your father of my intentions; here is his answer: he consents to every thing; he approves an alliance by which he feels himself honoured, and he places your destiny wholly in my hands."

Had a thunderbolt struck me, the shock could scarcely have been greater. Amelina in a convent! this misfortune was the first that it was important for me to prevent. In consequence, wishing to gain time, I replied, as if by celestial inspiration: "Why should we so soon lose the society of the interesting Amelina! Why, madam, should she not be a witness of our union, of our felicity! I conjure you, in the name of that *pure friendship* you have expressed for me, and of that *respectful timidity* which increases my claim to it, do not send away your niece until the altar has received our vows."

"I confess I shall part from her with pain: I readily consent to your wish, my dear Luke: Amelina shall be a witness of our felicity."

Here the conversation closed. Madame de Courtonasi left me, and for fear that she should take it into her head to return to the charge, I went out to consider, far from the *Hotel de Normandie*, of the means to parry the most direful blow by which I had ever been menaced. Miracle the second! Walking along the *boulevards* of the temple, I heard a man crying with all his strength, Here is the lottery list! Who buys the lottery list! I took out my pocket-book, examined by turns the list and my numbers.—2, I

have it !—20, I have it !—22, I have it ! Bravo ! a hundred and thirty-two thousand livres !—My joy is too much for me.—I raved like a maniac. Amelina is mine !—I run, I fly back to the *Hotel de Normandie*.

The aunt is absent ; I find my dear Amelina alone in her apartment ; I throw myself at her feet, I embrace her knees, I commit a thousand extravagances. But the more absurd my actions, the more dignified and reserved is Amelina.

"Are you come here, sir, to insult me in my unhappiness?"

"I come to swear——"

"No oaths, sir ; I should take them for fresh outrages."

"But in pity, suffer me to speak, to explain to you——."

"All explanation is useless : I am resolved to quit the world, and to-morrow."

"To-morrow, my dear Amelina, you shall become my wife, my inseparable companion."

"This irony, sir."

"You torture me : I am sincere : to-morrow you shall be mine. Fortune has seconded my wishes ; I am rich, immensely rich. Here is your portion—182,000 livres, all, all is yours, too happy if you will deign to unite your fate to mine."

"I am unable to comprehend you.—Your marriage with my aunt."

"Is a mere jest."

"She is gone to her notary."

"I will go to mine."

"You will provoke her."

"We will appease her again."

"I shall never obtain her consent."

"Yours is all I desire."

"You hope it in vain."

"Suffer me to manage the matter, and I will engage for success, without making you fail in obedience to your aunt."

"It may be so : I will not be your accomplice."

"But you will pardon the culprit."

"No means unworthy of a man of honour !"

"Never fear it : a little plotting only."

"Agreed."

By this time Madame de Courtonasi returned, and read to us both the draught of the deed that she had been to fetch from her notary. "This evening, my dear Luke, a clerk will bring the original for us to sign. Go, take this

draught; read it over carefully, and if you wish any alteration, let me know, and it shall be made."

I accordingly took away the paper; but, instead of retiring with it to my chamber, I ran to another notary, who immediately prepared one similar to it, in which he substituted the name of *Amelina de Vaudoncour* for that of *Olympade Courtonasi*, and the seventeen of the amiable niece, for the fifty-two of the ridiculous aunt. I afterwards gave my instructions to my notary's clerk, who was not incorruptible: he understood me perfectly, and promised to be beforehand with his brother at the Hotel in the evening.

On my return, I found a grand dinner provided, at which the good aunt had invited three gentlemen who were to witness the contract. Scarcely was the dessert brought on the table, when my clerk arrived. At the sight of him, the amorous lady brightened up with joy, while the gentlemen drank to the health and felicity of the parties.

Amelina was silent, but her looks were expressive of the anxiety she underwent: for me, I trembled every limb, fearing that the entrance of the second clerk might shipwreck us in sight of port. At length, the reading of the instrument commenced: "*This Indenture—*" "Never mind the formal part," cried I, "come to the material at once." "*We the undersigned—*" Then followed the names, age and description of the husband, such as Madame de Courtonasi had thought fit to describe me; the rest was omitted by my urging the clerk to come to a conclusion. I signed boldly, my aunt followed my example, and our witnesses did the same.

Provided with these essential testimonies, I presented the paper to Amelina: she grew pale, I thought she was on the point of fainting.

"I shall not feel myself absolutely happy, Mademoiselle," said I, "if your sanction be not added to this treaty."

Amelina resisted: her aunt pressed her, she at last took up the pen, I directed her trembling hand, after placing it at the part where it was necessary she should sign; this charming name was at length inscribed, the clerk ran off with the deed, and I embraced my bride.

Severe critics! austere censors! you blame me! you accuse me!—What have I done? what you have applauded a thousand times at the theatre. I have made use of the plot of a comedy to conclude my memoirs. Such is my

fault! But what is a comedy! a romance. What is a romance! a comedy. Hiss me, if you like it; I shall at least have the consolation of not hearing your hisses.

Did not the aunt richly merit the punishment she met with! A woman of fifty-two to think of marrying a youth of nineteen! You would not have suffered such a marriage on the stage, neither ought you to have suffered it in these memoirs, the only aim of which was to amuse. After quarrels, reproaches, anger, fury, and high words in abundance, we have come to an accommodation. Madame de Courtonasi, now my aunt, has pardoned us; Amelina, who has read but few dramatical pieces, finds my plot *excessively* ingenious. Augustina Maurille has received the husband and portion I promised her. I have been perfectly happy since the year 1789, the epoch of my marriage, and of the revolution. In a word, I every morning return thanks to the *short straw*, which conducted me into the road of fortune.

If a chimney should not fall on my head, if a carriage should not run over me in the streets of Paris, if a quack should not poison me, I shall, doubtless, live long enough to encounter a fresh train of adventures, the recital of which will occasion no small pleasure to the friends of truth and probability.

THE
LIFE OF MY UNCLE,
WITH HIS PORTFOLIO.

EXORDIUM.

MY Uncle Michael, after having hemmed three several times with the gravity of a senator, addressed us in the following words: "My dear nephews, you see in me a memorable example of the vicissitudes of fortune. Some particulars of my life you are already acquainted with, but of the greater number you are still ignorant. I have several times promised to give you a succinct detail, and am now about to fulfil my promise: I request your serious attention. In case you have any reflections to make on what I relate, speak boldly: I have always loved truth, especially when it is not too dry."

At these words, my uncle paused awhile, and thus resumed his discourse.

Birth of my Uncle, and his journey to Paris.

"I was born in a little town of Burgundy. My father, who was a notary, sent me when very young to a boarding-school; where, according to custom, my progress in Latin was rather slow. I received boxes on the ear, and whippings in abundance, and, strange to say, they did not forward me a jot. My father destined me for his profession, but a peculiar attachment that I early discovered to finance, baffled all his views in that respect.

"Seeing that I was not calculated to shine as a notary, he at length judged it best no longer to control my inclinations. At the age of sixteen, it was resolved to send me to Paris, as a fit place to develop my financial talents, and where alone I could hope to derive some advantage from them.

"My mother opposed this design; my father, in consequence, persisted in it more strongly: the good man was naturally tenacious, and could not bear contradiction. The time being fixed for my departure, I took leave of all my relations and acquaintance: my visits occupied me three days, and these three days appeared to me three centuries. I was impatient to quit a spot where my hours had dragged on so heavily, and where I had not even formed the least inclination to any one of the other sex.

"It was on a Good-Friday, at five o'clock in the morning, that I was stowed in a higgler's cart. My whole baggage consisted of six shirts, three pairs of stockings, and a couple of cravats, tied up in an old silk handkerchief. As to the rest of my wardrobe, I carried it all on my back: I could have said with the philosopher Bias: *Omnia mecum porto*.

"The road was exceedingly rough: I was jolted so incessantly and with such violence during the ten leagues we had to go, though we were twelve hours going them, that by the time I arrived at my journey's end, I was bruised from head to foot inclusive, and could with difficulty dismount from the vehicle.

"We reached Auxerre about eight o'clock in the evening, and went to take up our abode for the night at the sign of the flying fish. I made but a moderate supper: my father, who read almost every treatise on economy as soon as it appeared, and who had by that means acquired some knowledge of the *net produce*, had garnished my purse very slenderly. I possessed in all, and for all, two crowns of the value of six livres each: it required some calculation to make that sum hold out until I should arrive at Paris: this was my first financial operation.

"After having eaten a couple of herrings and drunk half a bottle of sour wine, I retired to my chamber. my stomach was not overloaded, and I enjoyed the repose of innocence. I slept soundly till six o'clock in the morning, when I was awakened and informed that the boat which sailed from Auxerre to Paris, and in which I was to embark, was about to set off. Accordingly, putting on my clothes and paying my bill, I took up my bundle and hastened to the water-side.

"On entering the boat, I was surprised to see the crowd of passengers, of all ages and conditions. The confusion that reigned in this second Noah's ark, the cries of the sailors, the squalling of children, with the songs of their

nurses, the continual noise of persons coming in and going out, the swearing of a parcel of soldiers, and the prolix tittle-tattle of a party of women, made me believe for a moment that I was in another world.

"My eyes surveyed with attention all the divisions and sub-divisions of this floating dwelling; examined every individual one by one, in hopes of discovering some person of my acquaintance: it was in vain. I took a seat in the *common cabin*, or rather, I stowed myself among the nurses, the children, the soldiers, and all those who could not or did not choose to pay for a place in the *private cabin*.

"One smoked his pipe, another sung: this was haranguing, that was storming with his lungs at their utmost stretch. In my life I have never heard a similar hubbub: it seemed as if Hell was let loose in this miserable hovel. At length, to the satisfaction of all the passengers, orders were given to weigh *anchor*.

At the word anchor, my brother Nicholas could not avoid giving a sardonic grin. My uncle perceived it, and appeared a good deal nettled at such a piece of ill-manners.

"Excuse me, sir," said Nicholas to him; "one may easily discover that you have never studied the science of navigation: boats, barges, and craft of that sort are confined by ropes, and not by anchors. Anchors are only used for ships and large vessels. If you will condescend to listen to me for half an hour, I will engage to give you an excellent dissertation on anchors: I will first of all define an anchor; I will then distinguish with precision their origin, their use, their bulk, length, breadth and weight, how many different sorts there are, &c., &c.

Hearing this scientific enumeration, my uncle began to gape dreadfully; from sympathy, my brother Nicholas and I did the same: all my family have a dislike to dissertations, and my uncle therefore continued his recital.

"Scarcely had we quitted the shore, when I overran for the second time my new wooden residence, without saying a word to any one. I afterwards took up my position in one corner of the before-mentioned general rendezvous, where I began to reflect on what I should do at Paris. Insensibly, I became drowsy, and soon snored with all my might, when the boat striking on a sort of soft bank, gave me such a violent jolt, as to drive my head against that of a young woman by my side, and whom I had not before remarked: she uttered a shriek which made me tremble

every limb ; I, however, apologized to her, all the while swearing at the sailors, whom I boldly (but not within their hearing) called a parcel of ignorant, inattentive fellows.

"The young woman, without answering me a word, looked at me earnestly, and a moment after turned her head another way : I was desirous of addressing her, but she would not afford me an opportunity. Vexed at this contempt, I raised my voice and began a discourse wherein I endeavoured to convince her, that the accident which had taken place inevitably resulted from the shock the boat had received, and a natural effect produced by a natural cause.

"From thence I took the opportunity of introducing a discussion on the nature of the evil which existed in the world, and which was a result from general laws. I argued with such eloquence and in so convincing a manner, that the young woman and the other passengers around me *dropped off* one by one, that is, they fell asleep. Struck with the silence that suddenly prevailed, and secretly disappointed at the ill impression made on my hearers, I tried to awaken them.

"The first I pushed, offended at my audacity, as he termed it, answered my call by a blow with his fist : I replied to his salutation by a kick on the shins. The combat then raged with fury : we seized each other by the collar, and wrestled like gladiators. We were with difficulty separated, when I retired to another part of the boat, where, fatigued with talking, beating, and being beat, I resumed my reflections, and even made new ones on the nature of man in society, (for I have always been a great moralizer,) and, above all, in the society of a packet-boat. A person who was seated near me drew me from my reverie, by calling me by my name. I was overjoyed to be recognized by any one so unseasonably ; but how great was my transport to see my friend Bernard ! We shook each other by the hand in the most hearty manner imaginable, and our satisfaction seemed mutual at the unexpected meeting.

"The tears of affection absolutely streamed from his eyes, a sight which excited mine : I wept like an infant.

"Pardon me this moment of sensibility, my dear nephews : it is the only one I ever experienced in my whole life. I afterwards promised, and I have kept my word, never to weep again whatever event, happy or unhappy, might befall me. Sensibility is only a proof of weakness, and of the

irritability of the nerves ; at most, it can but be recommendable in a woman. In consequence, I have always disapproved of that pretended sublime passage of Terence : *Homo sum ; nihil humano a me alienum puto.*

"Sensibility is, nevertheless, a virtue," replied my brother Nicholas ; "it is the soul of all the great actions, and all the good which are none in the world ; it kindles the genius of the poet, guides the hand of the philosopher, produces elevated ideas, and plants here and there a flower on the thorny road of life."

My brother was about to pursue his declamation, when my uncle interrupted him by saying, that all he had advanced were no better than the phrases of a school-boy in rhetoric, and proved nothing.

"This Bernard," resumed my uncle, "whom I met in the boat, was one of my fellow-townsmen. After questioning each other on what we were going to do at Paris, we agreed to blend the contents of our purses, and to make our expenses common to both during the rest of our journey : he, accordingly, drew from his pocket nine livres which he delivered into my custody, and I, in consideration, was to pay for everything. We continued three days and three nights in the boat ; on the fourth morning we disembarked at the port of St. Paul, and entered Paris."

My Uncle's introduction to an Attorney's Office, which he quits for that of a Banker.

"On leaving the boat, I took a *fiacre* which drove me with Bernard, to the *Hôtel de la Martelléné*, where, after breakfasting together, we separated, promising soon to see each other again. I went to the house of an old relation to whom I had been recommended : he resided in the *Rue du Fouarre*. As soon as I had given him my father's letter, he told me that the following day he would introduce me to an attorney, one of his friends, where I should be boarded and lodged ; he added, that it would be for my interest to conduct myself prudently, and to endeavour all in my power to merit his approbation. He from that, took occasion to make a digression on legislation, laws, natural right, custom, practice and forms.

'Above all,' said he, 'study the forms ; it is the quintessence of jurisprudence : without forms, there can be no justice, and without justice there would be no society.' He

made several other observations of the same nature, which I will not trouble you with, for, my dear nephews, you have no more to do with justice than I have : in my opinion, it is proper only for judges.

"Dinner was brought up, at which I ate enough for four, to make amend for the fast I had suffered during the voyage. In the evening I went to the play, from whence I returned to sleep at my relation's.

"The next morning about eight o'clock, he conducted me to the house of his friend, the attorney. After the usual compliments, he said to him : 'This young man is a cousin of mine ; I bring him you to make a lawyer of, or rather, a formalist. If one may judge of the latitude of his understanding by his size, he will one day do something in a profession in which, to succeed, requires considerable dexterity. Not being over affluent, he must diligently persevere to repair the wrongs of fortune. I deliver him into your hands, and confide him to you as a deposit, of which I shall expect you to give a good account at some future period ; I am thoroughly convinced that you will push him in a career at once useful and glorious.'

"After these few words by way of introduction, the attorney put on his spectacles, surveyed me from head to foot, coughed twice, took a pinch of snuff, shook his head, and without answering, made me a sign to open a door behind me which led to his office : this order I complied with, and found myself in the midst of five young fellows, who were all applying pen to paper with incredible activity. The head clerk placed me at the desk, and gave me a long draught to copy. Scarcely had I done a few lines, when he and all the rest came to observe my writing, and paid me a compliment on its neatness as well as on the quickness of my hand.

"I must here give you the portraits of the attorney and his wife. He was a man about five and forty, at most, four feet nine inches high, dirty in his person, small eyes, flat nosed, bloated cheeks, short necked, punched belly and bowed legs : so much for his physical description. As to his mental qualities, I augured unfavourably of them at first sight, and on better acquaintance, I had no reason to alter my opinion : his soul was narrow, vile and vindictive. In a word, this limb of the law was the living model of all human imperfections.

"His dear moiety was alone worthy to be his associate :

ugly, round-shouldered, envious and peevish, she never opened her mouth but to backbite or to scold : she did evil from instinct, and good, when at all, from calculation. Interest, more interest, had united them, and interest with them was much more short-sighted than nature and love. Thus, this amiable couple seemed born for each other.

"I continued my labour till dinner-time, when I followed my new comrades into another room, where was served up a large quantity of soup, with a little morsel of meat in it, which was honoured with the name of beef : a glass of very humble wine terminated this economical repast, after which we returned to the office to scribble away afresh. Such was the life I led from day to day at the attorney's.

"At the end of three months I grew disgusted with the profession ; in consequence, I quitted it and engaged myself to a banker : there I began to enjoy myself.

Having proceeded thus far, my uncle arose and desired to see us the next day, when he would pursue his adventures. My brother Nicholas stopped him to make some observations on certain circumstances which did not appear to him to correspond exactly with truth. "That is nothing," replied my uncle ; "in every recital, one is allowed to amplify, to give it a little interest : without amplification, my dear Nicholas, we should soon have nothing to say ; it is amplification which supports conversation : it affords matter to a professor to tire his scholars ; to an advocate, to lull the jury to sleep, and to a creditor, to irritate his debtor. Without amplification," continued he with increased energy, "what would fill our immense libraries, the parchments of attornies, and the letters of lovers ?

"This admirable figure of rhetoric has been ingeniously invented to beguile the attention and to kill time. I have the greatest obligations to it : had it not been for that, how should I have been able to compose in the course of my life, three hundred and twenty-seven tracts on the finances of France, and ten volumes in folio on the different banks of Europe ? By means of this wonderful figure, a subject is never exhausted ; there is always something remaining to be said upon it ; and even if one should live as long as Methusalem, one might, during the whole of such a long interval, be writing on a matter without wearing it out—Amplification—ampli—fi—ca——"

My uncle was about to proceed, when a violent hiccough

seized him, which terminated his declamation, and released us from the drowsiness by which we began to be assailed.

My Uncle at the Banker's.

THE next day my uncle resumed the thread of his adventures in these terms :

"The banker in whose service I entered, was a man who, to a thorough knowledge of his business, added a considerable knowledge of the world. On the Exchange he was the most skilful, the most subtle of all that frequented it : he would tell you the value of a bill at first sight, or the effect of a piece of news directly he heard it. In company he was always polite and amiable ; those who had seen him in the morning on 'change, would never have suspected him to be the same man.

"For a time my chief occupation was to copy letters to and from his correspondents ; this I did with the more satisfaction, as it required no exertion of the mind : I also occasionally made fair copies of accounts, and, in short, all that a junior clerk is usually employed in doing. The zeal and activity with which I acquitted myself in these functions, excited the attention of my master, who, then with some reason, presumed that I should one day make a figure in his line.

"By degrees, I acquired the method of book-keeping by double entry, and began to have something more to do with the concerns of the business. One of the principal clerks going away a little while afterwards, left a place vacant, to which I was promoted with a considerable increase of salary. It was then that love came to disturb the repose which till that time I had enjoyed."

At these last words of my uncle, my brother Nicholas shrugged up his shoulders. My uncle remarked it, and demanded the cause.

"You told us, uncle," replied Nicholas, "that when you were in the Auxerre packet-boat, you made a resolution, never to suffer yourself to be affected by any emotion of sensibility ; it appears that you have not kept your word in this respect. What is love if it be not sensibility carried to the last extremity ?"

"My dear Nicholas," rejoined my uncle, "do not fancy so : love is merely a brutal passion which seeks its own satisfaction : it is a want like that of eating or drinking.

Nothing moral enters into it ; it is a fantasy that torments us, and which passes away with the object that deigns to humour it. To consult the poets, love is the chief of the gods ; to attend to philosophers, it is the bond of society and the first of duties ; to judge from the language of individuals, it is an unhappy passion which is invariably followed by regret. From these opposite opinions, I have formed one of my own, certainly wiser, since by acting conformably to it, I have always preserved my repose and tranquillity. Another time I will explain to you my system at length : I will now pursue the events of my life."

First amour of my Uncle

"A young woman who lodged in the same house as I did," continued my uncle, "was she who kindled in my heart the first spark of love : she was worthy of making a more flattering conquest, and I will sketch you her portrait. Adelaide, (that was her name) united to the charms of beauty all the fine qualities of the soul : her features, though not perfectly regular, had something so unusually attractive, that it was impossible to see without adoring her : large black eyes, an aquiline nose, vermilion cheeks, an incessant smile, and the freshness of Hebe : such were the particulars of which her animating countenance was composed : add to these, a slender shape, a figure rather above the middle size, and a grace in the smallest of her movements, and you will have an idea of the physical charms of Adelaide.

"With respect to the moral, she resembled, as far as I am acquainted, no one of her sex ; that is to say, she had all the perfections of ours. It is surprising that so rare an object should captivate my senses, or even those of an older philosopher ! I took an opportunity of making her the tenderest declaration I was able : she answered me only by a loud laugh : I wished to be angry, but had not the power. I retired, my soul a prey to sorrow, which she perceiving, and I have reason to imagine it had some effect upon her.

"At my next visit, I renewed the declaration : she received it with a serious air, upon which, I flattered myself I had made some progress in her heart : nor was I deceived : our intimacy increased ; and what might have been the consequence I will not say, had not an officer of

dragoons just at this critical moment deprived me of the lady and my hopes at once. Alas ! who in this world can think of enjoying lasting happiness ? on going to her apartment early in the morning, I found she had decamped, without bidding me adieu, or apprising me of the step she was about to take, and which I did not learn till a day or two afterwards.

"On the first discovery of her perfidy, life became a burthen to me, and I resolved to be freed from it. I considered what method would be the speediest and the least painful : after many reflections, by the aid of certain philosophical thoughts, I recollected that it would be shameful to quit my post without the orders of him who had placed me at it, and therefore concluded to live, to get the better of my passion, and to renounce love entirely."

"Renounce love !" exclaimed my brother Nicholas ; "that would be to renounce all the pleasures of life : it would be to vegetate like an insensible plant, it would be——."

He was unable to continue, so much was he shocked at this melancholy idea.

My uncle paid no attention to his exclamations, but, finding him pause, thus proceeded : "In order to attain this desirable end, I applied to the study of finance. I read over and over and over again the various works which professed to treat on the subject, forgetting not to instruct myself in all those written by economists, as well as those which particularly related to the essential part of the *net produce*."

"Provided with this fund of information, I composed my first essay on the finances of my own country, in which I demonstrated in the most evident manner and beyond contradiction, that the receipt of taxes as they were then received, was vicious, and that I was acquainted with a method to receive them without costing a *sous* to government. I printed my work at my own expense, but got rid of only twenty copies, which I gave away to my friends."

"Finding that my first ideas on this intricate subject did not meet with public attention, I composed a pamphlet in the style of the economists, wherein I proved, that by laying a tax on bee-hives, the national treasury would realize, at least, two millions annually. This pamphlet was not more successful than my former : I was looked upon as a madman, or at least, an enthusiast : some, indeed, went so

far as to tell me to my face, that I was no better than a fool. The first who had this audacity, in return for his observation, received from me a wound in the arm with my sword, which convinced him that if I could not write to please the world, I was at least capable of punishing an insult."

My Uncle quits the Banker's, and engages himself to a Farmer-general.

"EVER since the dreadful event of Adelaide's flight, and the way in which I had satisfied my injured honour, I vainly sought tranquillity of mind. Every one seemed to reproach me : my fellow-clerks were soon informed of my duel and the occasion of it, which furnished them an opportunity of launching the bitterest sarcasms against me. Tortured by my own feelings on one side, and vexed by the jests of my comrades on the other, I begged permission of the banker, to resign, which he granted without offering any objection. I accordingly left him, and a few days afterwards engaged myself to a farmer-general, as his secretary.

"I now studied finance with redoubled diligence, and composed several tracts which obtained the approbation of my master. This approbation was a spur to my industry : I wrote answers to all the *memoires* of Messrs. Neckar and de Calonne, in which, in my own opinion, I refuted the assertions of each in the clearest manner. I began to fancy myself a perfect financier, and to congratulate myself on my vast and profound acquirements, when an unforeseen event happened which dispelled my illusion, and re-plunged me in chagrin.

"One of my countrymen, recently arrived in the capital, brought me a letter from a relation, which informed me that my father and mother had paid the last tribute to nature, leaving me not a *sous* exclusive of my portion, which was very small. I did not give a single tear to their memory ; but cursed them heartily for having, as it were, disinherited me."

"What !" said my brother Nicholas, "you did not shed a tear on their tomb ? You were then deaf to the voice of nature."

"Nature," replied my uncle, "is a fool : besides, my dear Nicholas, can you define nature ! it is a vague word that signifies nothing. We attribute to the motions of

nature what, in fact, is only the consequence of our prejudices. I became master of them pretty early in my life; and since the adventure so replete with sensibility which happened to me in the packet-boat, no one has ever seen my eye dishonoured by a tear: I have been a gainer by this stoicism, and have sworn to be affected by nothing, to fear nothing, and even should heaven shower its fury on my head:

Impavidum ferient ruinae——."

After this Latin quotation, my uncle paused a moment: then, suddenly starting up, he thus apostrophized his deceased parents:

"O, unnatural, wicked, and cruel parents! you thought to punish me in leaving me only what you could not keep from me. You were deceived! I never loved you, and now you are dead, I hate your memory. Your narrow souls never gave birth to those grand conceptions which constitute the charm of my life, and which will conduct me to immortality. You have vegetated, like what you were, in a paltry town, without conceiving a single financial idea in your whole lives, without the smallest knowledge of that science, the result of the riches of nations: you never read the learned, the profound Adam Smith——."

My uncle was proceeding to speak with the same vehemence, when somebody knocked at the door, and interrupted him. I opened it, and returned to tell my uncle that it was his cousin John, who desired to speak with him.

: "Let him come in," replied he; "I have always esteemed John because he like me, has laboured, and still labours, in the thorny path of finance. He is the author of an elaborate work in this line, in six octavo volumes, that nobody reads, because the world prefers trifles to sound sense, and the *Calembourgs* of Madame Angot, to the *Perfect Financier*."

The cousin now entered the room: my uncle rose up to meet him, and, after the usual compliments, he said to him:

"My dear cousin, I am extremely glad to see you, and you will do me the favour to hear me read a new project of finance that I have finished only a few days, on the sprat and oyster fishery. Should it be carried into execution, it would put, at least, an annual sum of three millions on

hundred and two thousand and four frames, seventy-five centimes, into the coffers of government."

"Is that all?" exclaimed his cousin; "I have in my pocket a manuscript which will, at least, produce to the national treasury eleven millions a year:—it is by laying a tax on tea, lemonade, ices and other things of that description, sold by the confectioners.—I am come to read it to you, in order to convince you of the wisdom of my plan, and of the justness of my calculations."

As he ended these words, the cousin took from his pocket an enormous manuscript, and approached my uncle, who had already got his in hand and was beginning to read it. A strong debate ensued between them to know which should be heard first. My uncle would not give way: his resistance irritated the cousin, who told him in an angry tone, that he had never conceived one idea truly financial, that his language was dry and fatiguing, and that he ought to be satisfied with copying without composing.

My uncle, by no means of a patient disposition, answered this affronting language by a blow with his treatise on sprats and oysters on the cousin's cheek, who, in his turn replied by throwing at my uncle's head his tracts on confectionery. My brother Nicholas got between them as quick as possible, gathered up their manuscripts, and pressed them to terminate the dispute by deciding by lot which should read first. Nicholas's proposal was accepted: fortune favoured my uncle, who immediately opened his papers, and in a tone of exultation began to deal out his stuff, when a great noise on the staircase interrupted him.

My brother Nicholas and I ran to see what occasioned this disturbance. It was a gentleman who on going down stairs was attacked by the falling sickness. On returning to the room, Nicholas requested my uncle to explain to him the nature of the falling sickness.

"The falling sickness, my dear Nicholas, is a malady against which no medicine has any effect: it is a terrible disorder, and, when at its height, it frightens away all those who attempt to approach the unfortunate person who is attacked by it. Many have attempted to define it in vain: they were unable to succeed. Indeed, how can any one define what he is himself ignorant of? I will, therefore, not trouble you with the variety of definitions absolutely contradictory to each other, which are to be met with in

different medical authors : it would only be leading you into error."

While my uncle was thus discoursing, his cousin, to his great regret, found means to slip away : he, however, was not so much disconcerted but that he prepared to recommence the reading of his manuscript, when he was informed somebody wished to speak with him. He quitted us, and begged we would come the following day to hear the continuance of his adventures.

My Uncle's project on Potatoes.

"THE death of my parents made no alteration either in my ideas or in my manner of living. I composed new projects on finance, which, from pure malice, the world declined to read. In vain I subjoined commentaries to explain my plans : those who *had* the complaisance to peruse them, pretended they could not comprehend my meaning.

"Tired of constantly labouring without reaping either profit or fame, I kept quiet for a period of six months, simply occupied with the functions of my secretaryship, when one morning, a happy thought came into my mind, which I hastened to put into execution. This was, to write a treatise on potatoes : I described the immense advantages that would accrue from it to the people, and those which would result from it to the government ; and I flattered myself that I should be placed at the head of an enterprize of which I should have given the first idea. I will point out to you the basis of this project which created me so many enemies, and which would certainly have been put in practice but for the extreme facility of its execution.

"I proposed to the government to buy up all the potatoes which were grown in the different provinces, at a price to be fixed by themselves : to warehouse them, and to sell them again to the public. I advised them at the same time to plant them in all the parks and farms belonging to the crown.

"In giving this salutary counsel, I demonstrated that these vast parks were absolutely useless, and that they contained an immense quantity of land fit for culture. I even went so far as to persuade the government to force the overgrown proprietors of parks in France, to sow them with potatoes. This project, which contained sage and

enlightened views, was not, however, attended to ; but I have carefully preserved it as a precious work, in order to impart it to posterity, who will not lose a moment in executing the most sublime conception that ever entered the head of a man."

"But, my dear uncle," objected my brother Nicholas, "what could the government have done with such a prodigious quantity of potatoes?"

"What could they have done with them, my dear nephew ! why, they might have distributed them among all the countries that do not grow them : they might have fattened with them vast droves of pigs which might afterwards have been exported to foreign nations ; and then, would not the Rumford soups have consumed millions of them ? You find how this branch of commerce, when developed in all its ramifications, would have augmented the wealth of the state : we should have rolled in money : we should have monopolized all the riches of other countries, and become the absolute masters of Europe, since we should thus have possessed the means of supporting them."

My uncle, an enthusiast in every thing, was about to pursue in the same strain the display of his immortal project on potatoes, when my brother Nicholas stopped him, by saying :

"In my opinion, this project could never have been of any service. France is fertile in corn, vines and vegetables ; in a word, it produces the choicest commodities for the sustenance of man ; why should you wish her to undertake a branch of commerce from which she could reap no benefit ? I have read, as well as you, my dear sir, the works of the economists ; but never saw that their calculations rested on the culture and sale of such an article as potatoes. If your project failed, I cannot think that the public suffer by it——."

"You are no better than a fool, my dear Nicholas," replied my uncle : "you forget that scientific adage,—*great effects are produced by trifling causes*. I have taken this famous maxim for my guide in all my labours, and which I still hope one day to realize. To be sure, the enterprize is arduous ; but, with courage and perseverance, we bring about every thing. I am desirous of rendering my name illustrious at any price whatever, and I shall yet succeed in my design. I am only sixty, and may fairly reckon on thirty years to come : those thirty years I intend to employ

for glory. At present, I will continue the recital of my past adventures.

Second amour and marriage of my Uncle.

"THE place of secretary that I occupied with the Farmer-general," said my uncle, "left me many leisure moments in the course of the day, which I employed in the career to which fate from my birth had doomed me. At length, I was one day greatly surprised to be told by my superior, that he had no further occasion for my services : he added, however, that he had it in his power to procure the post of Receiver at one of the ports of Paris, and that he would promise to obtain it for me on condition of my marrying a young lady who had seen me, but who did not love me nor ever would. 'You will live together as you can,' added he, 'the rest is perfectly indifferent.' This proposal shocked me at first ; but, ambition got the better of honour and delicacy, and determined me to accept it. Accordingly, I gave my word to the Farmer-general, who told me that my future bride would dine with him the next day, and that after dinner, the ulterior arrangements should be made for the marriage.

"The following day at the hour appointed, I was introduced to the lady : she accosted me with a gracious air, and told me she was charmed to unite her fate to that of a man like me : that our union should be purely spiritual, and that I had nothing to apprehend on the score of an increase of family. Although, after what had fallen from the Farmer-general, I ought to have expected a similar declaration, this sort of convention proposed and agreed upon did not fail to cause me the greatest astonishment : my wife that was to be, paid no attention to it, but turned round to a young man, and addressed him in such a way, as to convince me that he was to be the real, while I was merely the nominal husband.

"This reflection created in my mind a degree of disgust, which produced a certain alteration in my countenance that was directly perceived by the young lady's father, who was one of the company. He spoke of it to his daughter, who suddenly saluted me with a coaxing slap on the cheek, to drive away the anxieties which began to seize me. I attempted to smile ; but my smile appeared so forced and unnatural, that the persons near me who observed it, burst

into a laugh : a piece of behaviour that so highly exasperated me, that I was about to resent it in no very tame manner, when the Farmer-general whispered in my ear that I must not mind such trifles. I, in consequence, kept calm.

"By this time, dinner was served up : I was placed by the side of my *charmer* : I ate and drank enough for three, and literally followed the dictum of Moliere, who says, *that we must live to eat*. The dinner being over, I went with my bride, her father, the Farmer-general and some other persons of my acquaintance into a study, where we found a notary hastily scratching over our marriage contract : after executing which, we fixed for its celebration the next day but one. A licence had previously been obtained, and every thing so well arranged, that, at the time appointed, I was married, without well knowing why or wherefore.

"The following day, I took possession of my new post with my bride, who did not deign either to look at or speak to me."

"What you have been telling us, sir," said my brother Nicholas, "appears more like a fable invented at pleasure, than a mere fact. If it be the truth, as you would have us believe, without amplification, I cannot conceive, my dear uncle, how you, who have so much force and energy in your disposition, could, by such ridiculous conduct, make yourself, if I may so say, the laughing-stock of all your acquaintance. Was this the fruit of your persevering labour, of so many watchful hours, so many projects of finance so enlightening and so useful to mankind?"

"There exists, my dear nephew, a fatality that controls every thing in this world : it is to that fatality that all the misfortunes of my life are owing ; and when the Mussulmans admitted it to their religion, they admitted a truth. It is this blind power that governs all here below, which condemns the virtuous man to pain and sorrow, and which indulges in a profusion of pleasures on a bed of roses the wretch that ought to expire on the rack. It is in vain to study to avoid it ; we must come at last to the point ordained for us ; and with all our efforts, we can neither stop short of, nor go beyond it. Certain wild theologians have pretended to prove, that by means of the free will which is inherent in mankind, we have it in our power to act or not ; their assertions are contradicted by every day's experience."

My brother interrupted my uncle by saying, that, were

his system admitted, there would no longer be good or evil in the world, and that it would be indifferent to do one or the other.

"Not exactly so, Nicholas : self-interest and the *net produce*, sometimes make a vast difference between the two."

"However it be, sir, there are few proselytes to a system that could be productive of no good, and which must infallibly embitter the voyage of life. Therefore, my dear uncle, we will, if you please, drop the discussion, and hear something further of your interesting adventures."

My Uncle in his post of Receiver.

"THE new post that I occupied," continued my uncle, "was very lucrative ; yet, in spite of my considerable increase of income, I had scarcely sufficient to supply the wants of my pretended wife ; who set up a carriage, kept open house, had a box at all the theatres, and made one at every fashionable party. It was to no purpose for me to labour from morning till night like a horse in a mill, to fill my purse : I was not a jot the forwarder. I was obliged to contract debts : bills became due and I could not honour my engagements : my door was, in consequence, assailed by a crowd of creditors of all complexions : fortunately, heaven had endowed me with a face incapable of blushing, and a degree of stoicism very uncommon. I sent some away with promises, some I got rid of by assuming the man of power, and I shut my door in the face of the most obstinate.

"This course of living lasted about ten months. My creditors, who saw that I took no steps to satisfy them, now assaulted me with a shower of notices, writs, declarations, and interlocutory judgments : at length, my effects were seized by the iron hand of the law.

"Till then, I had concealed from my wife the disagreeable situation of my affairs : what took place in the house convinced her, beyond a doubt, that I was on the eve of ruin : she reproached me for it in the sharpest terms, and attributed to my misconduct the disaster of which she would become the victim. I answered not a word : she stormed the more loudly : I then attempted to speak in the tone of a master, when she gave me a smart box on the ear : I was stunned by this mode of argument, and retired to my study to draw out a balance of my accounts.

"I gilded the pill by shewing her that I could still face my enemies, that is, my creditors, boldly : she either believed or feigned to believe me. She had always considered me as a professed liar : I confess to you that I am a little addicted to this failing, and that to support my opinion, I sometimes do not stick at a lie. Besides, our religion permits pious frauds, and on this score at least, we agree : justified by authority, I would even go much further. There is an old proverb as excellent as the gospel itself, which says, that truth is not to be spoken at all times : and it was to avoid the inconveniences which might result from constantly speaking the truth, that I early applied myself to learn to lie with effrontery.

"In the world, falsehood is regarded as a vice : for me, I have always considered it to be a virtue : the man who, in society, should pique himself on speaking the whole truth and nothing but the truth, would be universally disliked and shunned : we must conform to the manners of those with whom we live ; and, as another proverb, which is, I think, St. Peter's, says, *we must howl with the wolves.*"

"Nevertheless," said my brother Nicholas, "to judge from what we are told by philosophers and moralists, there is nothing so odious as falsehood. Somebody asked Aristotle what advantage liars got by their falsities : he replied, that of not being believed even when they did say the truth. Religion condemns it, and has it so much in honour, that Saint Augustine was in the habit of saying, he would not tell even an innocent lie to save the whole universe from destruction."

"Aristotle and Saint Augustine," replied my uncle, "were two shallow-pates, whose sentiments were fit only to amuse critics and monks. Now-a-days, the world is of a very different way of thinking ; and, from the mendicant to the man who swims in opulence ; in matters essential as well as matters indifferent, every one lies with audacity and impunity, and nobody is the worse for it : by this means, a man deceives his friend, the husband his wife, the brother his sister : in the different classes of society, falsehood is the surest and firmest base. The tradesman deals out lies to his customers by wholesale : the lover is equally profuse to his mistress, the scholar to his master, the daughter to her mother ; and even to our bitterest enemy we wish good morning and good evening with pretended cordiality, while in our hearts we wish him at the devil."

Nicholas shrugged up his shoulders, and my uncle was preparing to support his opinion by examples, when the clock struck nine. He arose, and bade us farewell, appointing to meet us the following day.

Fresh misfortunes of my Uncle.

"My creditors, notwithstanding the statement I had shewn to my wife, and which I produced to them, were unwilling to grant me any further indulgence. The office to which it was my duty to render my accounts, and with which I had not been scrupulously exact, united with them against me : I was thrown into prison, and the whole of my property was taken possession of. Thus, the very means which I had flattered myself would produce my advancement, had proved my ruin : I was deprived of my liberty, and abandoned by all my friends, or rather those who, during my short-lived prosperity, had professed to be so : I called to mind these lines of Ovid :

“ Donec eris felix, multos numerabis amicos,
Tempora si fuerint nubila, solus eris.”

"However, I was not discouraged, but resolved to shew that I was above the malice of fortune. Accordingly, I affected a tranquil air, and a stoical firmness : my first care was to write to some of my *friends*, who did not condescend to honour me with an answer. I then composed a voluminous pamphlet in my justification, wherein I demonstrated that the office of the *Farmer-general* had treated me in the most unhandsome manner, and that my creditors were deficient in common sense.

"I procured this tract to be printed : it made no impression whatever on the public, and I still continued in prison.

"During this interval, justice took off the sequestration that had been laid on my property, and this, without summoning me to attend : a defect in forms so essential as to afford me an opportunity of opposing chicane to right, and I loudly complained of the superior *office*, my creditors, and justice herself, for having infringed the privileges of the citizen. I was preparing to compose a fresh *remonstrance* in support of my assertions, when my wife, who had gone just before my imprisonment to a watering place, wrote to say she should be back in three or four days. This letter

afforded me some consolation, and I impatiently waited her arrival.

"The fourth day she came to pay me a visit. She began by reproaching me; but presently gave me to understand that she would omit nothing in her power to effect my release from the abode I had found my way into during her absence.

"I gave her a paper containing the names of the persons whose credit she was to solicit, together with the observations to be made to each, after which she left me, and went to reside with the only friend who had remained faithful to me, where she was taken ill. I have omitted, my dear nephews, to speak to you of the persons whom I met with in prison, and with whom I became acquainted. The portraits that I am about to sketch may serve you for a rule in case you should, by the fatality I have before mentioned, get into those places."

Portraits of several of my Uncle's fellow-prisoners.

"AMONG the individuals incarcerated with me, there was a young man full of fire and imagination, who was detained as a pretended smuggler. His misfortune had not damped his natural ardour: though in chains, he displayed a degree of courage and fortitude of soul equal to the most painful sufferings. Without advice, counsel or attorney, he combated alone against a host of enemies that had sworn his destruction. It was he who furnished me with my first means of defence: it embarrassed my judges a little, and not a little those who thought to crush me. We were united by a sort of friendship in which the heart is not greatly interested, but which was produced by the similarity of our misfortunes and the process we had to sustain. We joined our purses together: his, which was scantily furnished, received the augmentation of mine. We, of course, messed in common; for we had foreseen, not without some foundation, that we should be still lodged for a certain time at the expense of the nation. (I forgot to tell you that the revolution at this time had reached its second epoch.) The hardship of my captivity was in some measure softened by society.

"By the side of us lodged a Dutch officer, who had prudently been confined for mal-practices in his professional character: his continual oaths and the vulgarity of his

manners induced us to refuse him admission into our mess : he was neither offended nor discouraged by this conduct ; on the contrary, he became a little polished, and we consented that he should make one of us. No poor wretch could ever have supported imprisonment worse than this man : he was constantly pacing the room, asking the hour, running every instant to the grate to learn the news, which he had always the art to pervert in repeating to us.

"At the end of a month, he was liberated, and was succeeded by a personage who had taken advantage of the scarcity of species to manufacture paper of all colours, which he induced the public to take as hard cash. As he voluntarily gave his notes to those who would be satisfied with them, and was not always ready when called upon, the nation, in whose name both virtue and vice are indifferently practised, felt a curiosity to inspect his *bank* and find out the real state of his affairs. His bank was found empty, and paper was all he had to give in exchange for paper.

"In consequence, our schemer was secured ; but, like a prudent man as he was, he had taken the precaution to *put* by a part of the specie for which he had given his valuable notes. He requested to be admitted into our society : we willingly acceded. I related my affair to him : he gave an account of his : we mutually and definitively concluded that the nation was unjust, and that the office of the farmer-general had been guilty of the greatest injustice towards me, for which it ought to be condemned to pay me considerable damages and interest on my salary and perquisites.

"Some days afterwards, our new companion requested our company, that is, to feast with us at his expense : several ladies also were invited. We drank deeply on the credit of the damages and interest which we were each to demand of those who had been the occasion of so unjustly depriving us of our liberty. But our *paper-maker*, calculating less on the goodness of his cause, than on the strength of his pocket, had the address to corrupt his keepers, and set off without bidding us good bye. I have since learned that he took the road to Holland, where he amused himself in spending the money that his credulous countrymen had so inconsiderately consigned to his care.

"He had not been gone above three days, when we had some new companions in our misery. Four or five young fellows, who had been kicking up a disturbance in the Palais Egalite, (the Palais Royal, my dear nephews,) were sent to

our prison by way of gentle correction. I never saw men so foolish and so impudent : they called each other Marquis, Count and Baron, though they had no greater pretension to any of these titles than myself. They thought to honour us by asking for the loan of a few crowns : we gave them a polite denial : they soon left the prison, and we heard nothing more of them."

As my uncle had gone on a long while without taking breath, he called for a glass of water to moisten his mouth, which was directly brought him. After having drunk it, he told us that he had always considered water as one of the principal agents of nature and as a sovereign remedy : that it was his only medicine, and that he would never take any other, whatever malady he might be afflicted with.

"I agree with you," replied my brother Nicholas, "that water is a true *dissolvent*, which is occasionally of indispensable use ; but too much of it weakens the body and even deprives the soul of its energy. Its only effect is to make us pusillanimous and cowards : it turns a man into a woman."

"What blasphemy !" cried my uncle ; "you surely have not read Macquart's large book on the properties of water, a sublime and wonderful work ! the fate it met with, is a shame to the human race for whose benefit it was written. This work, which ought to have been found in every library, which deserved to be put into the hands of youth, and to be circulated from one pole to the other, is quietly rotting on the bookseller's shelf.

"O blind and deplorable age ! while Doctor Macquart remains buried in dust, the works of Ducray Dumpsuil glitter in every shop, are packed on the quays for exportation, and are in the hands of all the world. Ducray Dumpsuil who, to make himself better understood, neglects to speak French, writes in the pastoral style with a degree of insipidity enough to give any one the vapours, and who, which is the worst of all, is incessantly writing. O, my country ! where is that brilliant genius, that enlightened understanding, which, like a friendly beacon, directed the course of our literati ? O, divine Macquart ! sublime author, trust me, you will be avenged by posterity. Ah ! if you had been so fortunate as to have printed your work in duodecimo, it would have had as many readers as one of Delille's poems !"

As it began to grow late, my uncle bade us good night, promising us the rest of the adventures of his remaining in prison, the following day.

Sequel of my Uncle's prison adventures and his malady.

"SOME time after the liberation of our pretended Counts, Barons, and Marquises, a man was brought to the prison whose wife played a considerable character in the affair of Cardinal Collier. I never in my life beheld a being more silly and more infatuated with his person. His chief occupation while his imprisonment lasted was his dress. He adorned himself every day, as if he were going in company, or to make one of a party of pleasure. Profoundly evasive, I was never able, to my regret, to discover the cause of his detention : he spoke little, and never seemed to think at all.

"At first, he imposed on us by his gravity and silence ; but we were soon enabled to appreciate him at his real value. An invisible hand supplied him with all the money he had occasion for ; and, though in prison, his expenses were considerable. After six months' stay with us, he departed, and his place was filled by an advocate accused of several capital offences. Gloomy and silent, this interpreter of the laws never discoursed with us but on the code, the digest, the nature of pleading, and the rules of evidence : it was in vain to endeavour to change the subject, he would always return to it, like a body thrown for a moment from its centre. We were wearied of his society, and discarded him from our little committee. Some days after, he set off for Renneo, where he was summoned to appear as an accomplice in a criminal affair. His departure occasioned us no regret.

"About this time I fell ill. A repletion caused by the want of exercise, was nearly conducting me to the grave. I was ordered to drink barley-water and water-gruel ; but they were of no avail on a body filled with *peccant* humours like mine. It was therefore judged proper to try an emetic which brought about so abundant an evacuation as to deprive me wholly of strength. I was so extremely affected by it, that it was supposed I had not many days to live : those who thought so were deceived : I soon got better, and regained by degrees my health and vigour.

"During my malady, the physician of the prison came

to visit me : he wrote prescriptions, which, happily, were not attended to. It was my prison companion whom I have before described to you that took upon him to administer the emetic : without him, I should not have been here to give you this account. Had the orders of the physician been followed, I should infallibly have been murdered. Until the moment of my attack, I had put some confidence in medicine ; I have lost it entirely since my convalescence : from that epoch I have conceived against medicine and the whole medical tribe, a hatred that will never be extinguished.

"In my opinion, medicine is all quackery : the ravages it makes among the human race, are more violent and more dreadful than plague, pestilence and famine put together ; and, were I a king, I would drive every practitioner out of the kingdom as a certain homicide. To prove that their art is incapable of prolonging life, let us cast our eyes on the country, where medicine is seldom had recourse to. Do the inhabitants live a shorter time on that account ? On the contrary, it is in the villages that we see men extend their career to the age of one hundred and twenty. To be sure, if the medicine could come without the physician or apothecary, as J. J. Rousseau says, it would not be quite so bad, but it is almost always accompanied by the prejudices or false calculations of him that prescribes or administers it."

"In spite of your philippic against medicine and the profession," said my brother Nicholas, "I have great obligations to both : had it not been for them, how should I have got rid of a disorder which, O, faithless Diana, pains me to think of !"

"How ?" replied my uncle : "I will inform you : water, abstinence and exercise ; they are the three great physicians of the human frame : no others need be consulted. It is my opinion, and it will always be that of every man endowed with a grain of common sense. As this discussion would carry us too far," added my uncle, "I will drop it here, and resume the thread of the events which succeeded my malady."

Change of Residence.

"WHEN I was thoroughly recovered, I was removed to another prison ; for what reason, I have not been able to

discover. In consequence, I was obliged to renounce the society to which I had become pretty well used and reconciled, and to find out, or, perhaps to find a new one : this was a great hardship to me at first ; but I began to accustom myself to it, because, in the world we get accustomed to everything.

"The place of confinement to which I was transferred, (that, my dear nephew, is the technical term,) was less disagreeable than that I had just quitted : I scraped acquaintance with an old counsellor, imprisoned for debt. I made him acquainted with the particulars of my affair, which he considered as favourable for me : his opinion pleased me extremely ; and by way of acknowledging my satisfaction, I admitted him to my table ; a circumstance so much the more pleasant to him, as with a very slender purse, he happened to have a most devouring appetite. He was so thankful for my invitation, that he would take the cookery upon himself, and I must say, to his honour, that he was as good a cook as he was a lawyer.

"Our intimacy continued six months, when a terrible event separated us, or rather, set us both at liberty. I need only mention the massacre of the second and third of September. We escaped the revolutionary axe by a sort of miracle. We parted, after giving each other our respective addresses. On leaving the prison, I went to visit one of my cousins, who received me with such coldness, that I quitted him without ceremony, murmuring at his inhumanity and cursing my own deplorable destiny.

"From him, I went to call on one of my debtors, whom I asked for the money he owed me. He gave me a part of it, with which I hired a furnished apartment, where I stayed about a fortnight. At the end of that time I got possession of my own furniture ; and after a short repose, which I stood in need of, I began to take proper steps to carry on my law-suit, and to trace out new plans of finance, economy and government."

"Your law-suit, my dear uncle," said my brother Nicholas, "was quite enough of itself to employ you, without intermeddling in things which did not at all concern you."

"You are deceived, my dear Nicholas," replied my uncle : "a single law-suit was not of itself sufficient for that purpose : to a laborious and active imagination, like mine, more than one occupation is required. As France,

at the epoch I mention, was overturned from one extremity to the other, and as Liberty had everywhere hoisted her triumphant standards, I believed the moment propitious for the propagation of certain ideas which, till then, had greatly tormented me. Everybody was then trying his hand at constitution-making : I was also desirous of forming one. The prospectus of it I presented to the committee by which France was then governed : all my ideas on the subject were contained in two thousand one hundred and twenty-one articles, without reckoning the notes and comments, which were at least equally voluminous.

"In this constitution, the most complete that has ever appeared, I provided for everything, even for those cases which never could happen. I dedicated it to the same committee, who deigned not to read it under the absurd pretext that I had been too prolix. I went through my work, abridged it with the greatest care, and reduced it from two thousand one hundred and twenty-one articles, to one hundred and twenty-one : it was then found too short.

"In despair at seeing this luckless constitution constantly rejected, I gave it up, and occupied myself in endeavouring to discover a mode of restoring our decayed finances. I, at length, hit upon a wonderful plan, wherein I minutely displayed all the bases of my project ; and I may say, without flattery, that I pretty well exhausted the matter."

"And what was this plan ?" said my brother.

"I will tell you," replied my uncle : "I proposed to take on lease all the lands belonging to the republic, and to cultivate them for the benefit of the community. I will not enter into the detail of the expense of culture, preservation, the quantity of labour required, or the extent of the produce. Suffice it to say, that by the means suggested, no one would have to pay any more taxes, and everybody would have enough to live upon."

"Such a project was impracticable," observed my brother Nicholas ; "at least, it could not take place without effecting another total change in society : the result of its execution would have been a complete anarchy."

"It is easy to form objections against a project, when the whole particulars are not brought forward," replied my uncle : "as I cannot let you have them, my plan being mislaid or destroyed, together with a thousand others, by the before-mentioned committee, we will not carry the discus-

sion any further ; but, as it grows late, bid each other good night."

Before my uncle quitted us, he shook us both by the hand, an action very rare with him, for he was a professed enemy to forms. Surprised at this mark of affection, my brother Nicholas could not refrain from smiling ; which seemed to hurt my uncle, who muttered something that we could not understand, and left us.

The Death of my Uncle's Wife, and his new Imprisonment

SOME days after, my uncle called upon us : having discoursed awhile on public news, he thus resumed the history of his adventures :—

"While occupied in composing voluminous treatises to ameliorate the system of government, and taking the necessary steps for the success of my law-suit, my wife died. I received the account of her death with the fortitude of a stoic, and without shedding a single tear. The manual of Epictetus, which I had read while in prison, had steeled my heart against the softer affections, to which, by the bye, it was never prone.

"The most distressing circumstance in this event was, to restore a portion that I had never received ; but what softened in some measure this inquietude was, that I was permitted to contest the claim. The relations of the defunct, two months afterwards, demanded the portion : I positively refused it. The usual preliminary forms were gone through, the matter was tried, and I lost my cause. I appealed to a superior court, in which the judgment against me was confirmed. Happily, the omission of certain formalities, which the law looks upon as essential, furnished me with the means of rendering the decision void ; and the affair was ordered to be placed in the same state it was in at the death of my wife. Her relations, tired with the proceedings, abandoned their claim and left me tranquil.

"I confess to you, my dear nephews, that I was by no means pleased with such a speedy termination to a contest that promised me a long series of endless discussions : in order to set the matter again in motion, I myself set up a claim against my wife's kindred, for her jewels and wearing apparel. They took no notice of my demand, and I accordingly commenced hostilities in form ; but, unfortunately, they soon after quitted the metropolis, and I heard no more

of them. However, not to remain idle, independent of my suit with the *farm* and my creditors, I wrote a pamphlet on the subject of diplomacy, in which I gave a word of advice to all the powers of Europe : I concluded, in imitation of the Abbé de Saint Pierre, with proposing to them the measure of a general peace.

"To save them the embarrassment of preparing the articles, I drew them up myself, and addressed a copy of them to each crowned head. This little work cost me considerable study and labour : I was scurvily rewarded for my pains : not one of them even acknowledged the reception of it : a piece of impoliteness that chagrined me so much that I wrote a libel against those very crowned heads, in which I sapped without mercy the principal foundations of society. Would you believe it ! they paid no more attention to this than to my project for a universal peace.

"Seeing my best intentions constantly frustrated, I formed the resolution to remain silent in future, and to meddle no further with the affairs of government : but, alas ! who can resist his destiny ! The insatiable itch of writing quickly inspired me with the desire of composing a work on the different banks of Europe. I sat down to it with such alacrity and perseverance, that in less than three weeks it was finished. It was printed at my own expense and risk. A part of the edition went off, because I had hazarded in it a few novel and enlightened ideas on the banking system, and because I pointed out a mode of doubling their profits without keeping a livre more in their hands : but the book and its author were soon forgotten.

"I then followed up my law-suit with indefatigable labour, and made a claim on the *farm*, of the sum of five hundred thousand francs, as an indemnification for the losses it had caused me to sustain. My demand was inspected by that famous committee of government ; for at that time all that was offered was received. I repeatedly solicited certain members of the legislative body, who, to get rid of my importunities, engaged me, with one of my brethren, to revise all the papers of the old farmers-general. This task I heartily undertook, because I longed to revenge myself of them. Their documents were delivered to us : these I dissected and investigated with the most scrupulous attention, which employed me no less than six months. At the end of that time, I made a circumstantial report, in which I proved that the major part of these documents was in-

correct, and that this hydra with a hundred heads had always vexed and tortured the people. I particularly attacked them for having mixed salt and water in the snuff, and for having adulterated the chief articles of consumption.

"This report was given in to one of the members of the legislative body, who read it, and proposed that all the Farmers-general should be legally proceeded against, which was unanimously resolved, in the midst of the greatest applauses. I left the assembly, overjoyed with this decision, and returned home exulting in the cruel vengeance I had taken of those gentlemen.

"Scarcely was I seated in my study, when I was informed that several relations and friends of these Farmers-general wished to speak with me. At first, I made a difficulty to admit them ; at length, however, I gave way. Some of them requested me to ask for delay ; others to save their lives by making a false report. I answered, that what they required was impossible, and that it was no longer in my power to do anything for them. At last, two or three more adroit than the rest, proposed to me to suspend the judgment as far as it concerned those on whose part they applied, and to strengthen their proposition, they mentioned a good round sum. At this word, I pricked up my ears, promised to solicit for them, and gave them hopes of success.

"In consequence, I called on certain persons in credit, whom I acquainted with the advantageous offer I had received. They were by no means displeased at my information, and took upon themselves the affair of the *enlightened* individuals who had sense enough to trust rather to money than to the goodness of their cause. Everything succeeded, and they were saved. I touched the sum stipulated, of which, to my great regret, I was allowed to retain but the smallest part. I was, however, obliged to seem contented. This now trade appearing to me profitable, I was desirous of continuing it. I frequented the offices and committees, in order to discover what was worth attending to ; but, as I had not always money at command, most of what I undertook miserably failed. I then resolved to solicit anew for my hundred thousand francs : I was answered by promises ; but, as I became more and more pressing, it was thought fit to cut the matter short at once : a warrant was issued against me, by virtue of which I was arrested and thrown into prison a second time.

"The nation, as the heir of the *Farmers-general*, was my adversary : it not only disputed the payment of the five hundred thousand francs that I demanded, but had moreover the audacity to set up a claim upon me for that very sum pretended to be due from me to the *Farm-general*. In consequence, a criminal process was instituted against me, which was eagerly followed up, and the result of which was my condemnation to an ignominious corporal punishment." On finishing these words, my uncle paused a moment, and after a profound sigh, he added : "You see, my dear nephews, that my whole life has been a perpetual chain of troubles, pains, and penalties. My enemies have wished to deprive me of everything, even of my honour. Honour, that according to Boileau, is,—

—— A rocky isle, of steep ascent,
Which quitted once can never be regained.

"It was this honour that I have always studied to preserve, and which is dearer to me than life : I have sacrificed everything to it ; and yet, I cannot help thinking it sullied by this last unworthy sentence. However,

The crime and not the scaffold brings the shame.

"As I was innocent, I troubled myself but little about the opinion of others : I have trodden under-foot the prejudices of the world : to submit to them, is to tug at the oar like a galley slave."

"They are, nevertheless, necessary," said my brother Nicholas, "to preserve the bonds of society : they are substitutes for the laws, and in many instances, are found more forcible. What has produced all the dreams of our modern philosophers ? The destruction of the barriers which might have stopped a timorous conscience ready to be carried to the commission of the greatest excesses. The tendency of every one of these visionary systems has been to accelerate a total overthrow of order and government in France, to sever the sacred ties of love and friendship, and to annihilate the social affections. Under the empire of the prejudices you speak of we were as happy as the nature of mankind would allow us to be : by annulling them, we have been deprived of those delightful illusions which soothed our imaginations from the cradle to the tomb. Under the reign of these pretended philosophers, we have seen men audacious enough to make open profession of

atheism, to write against God himself, and to sap the foundations of all worships and all religions."

My brother Nicholas continued to declaim with so much vehemence against philosophers and philosophy, that my uncle left us without perceiving it. I interrupted him to inform him of this circumstance, when he desisted, and we went out together.

The next day, my uncle wrote to appoint us a meeting in order to hear the adventures which followed his new imprisonment.

My Uncle's Second Marriage and subsequent events.

"I OMITTED to tell you, when we were last together, that some months before my new imprisonment, I was allured for the second time into the trammels of matrimony : in order to instruct you fully on this matter, it is necessary that I should carry you a little way back. After having published my project on the different banks of Europe, I became acquainted with a female of about thirty, who lived alone with her mother : she was the most artful creature I ever met with, as the sequel will evidently prove. At the commencement of our acquaintance, she affected a simple, innocent air, which deceived me entirely. Born without fortune, she had calculated in her cunning brain that I was a man fit to be duped : in consequence, she put everything in practice to captivate me, and succeeded, I believe, beyond her hopes. When she saw that I was no longer insensible to her charms, she ingenuously proposed marriage. This proposition at first made me startle : by degrees she accustomed me to it, and, like an arrant ass, I married one that no other would take. No sooner had I pronounced the fatal *yes*, than she began to show herself mistress of my house, and to lead me like a child.

"At the end of eight months after our wedding, she produced a lusty boy : I was assured it was mine, and I believed it, or at least, feigned to do so. Thus, I was married in spite of myself, and became a father without thinking anything of the matter. After this event, my wife fancied she might assume greater authority than ever, she did not let a day pass without provoking me by her asperity, and made a point of finding fault with everything I did : even now she exercises the same despotism over me ; and if heaven in its kindness does not speedily deliver

me from this fury in the shape of a woman, I shall certainly hang myself to get rid of her."

"Hanging is not the fashion at present," said my brother Nicholas; "a better method is invented: jumping into the river, and blowing one's brains out, are much more expeditious modes of giving time the slip: besides, the word *hanged* presents such a mean idea; and every man with a little true blood in his veins, ought to seek a glorious exit. If your intention, my dear uncle, is to destroy yourself, I advise you to go to the frontiers, and take revenge for the misconduct of your wife on the English and Austrians. You are, moreover, naturally brave; and it is in the midst of the enemies of your country that you ought to seek what you will undoubtedly one day meet with."

"You are in the right, my dear Nicholas," replied my uncle; "and if I ever really feel a desire of dying, which I do not think very likely to happen, I will follow your advice."

"But without hanging yourself, or dying in any other untimely manner," returned my brother, "cannot you administer a little wholesome chastisement to your wife?"

"I have already more than once tried the remedy that you prescribe," answered my uncle, "but always in vain: a woman is like an anvil; the more you strike her, the more she sounds. A truce for the present to these reflections, and listen to the rest of my adventures."

"As soon as I was informed of the sentence which had passed against me, I fell into a sort of lethargic stupor: I launched forth a thousand imprecations on the judges; and I hesitated whether I should survive my misfortune. I was in this perplexity, when my wife entered my room: after a torrent of reproaches that she lavished on me with a volubility of tongue scarcely credible, she addressed me in these words:—

"Michael, my dear Michael, this is not the moment to give way to affliction: we must endeavour to annul the ignominious sentence; for, if it should take place, what will become of me and of your innocent child! Revise the business, get the matter heard again, and find out some formal defect that may set it aside: if none can be found, invent one.—For God's sake, let something be done!"

"These energetic words of my wife restored my courage: I revised the proceedings with the eye of a critic, and consulted several first-rate advocates. The result was, that

the judgment ought to be annulled, since no less than thirteen essential formalities were wanting to make it valid. I presented a petition to the tribunal of cessation, who directly received it, reversed the judgment, and referred the matter to the decision of another tribunal of the department. I was, in consequence, removed from the prison I occupied in the metropolis, to that of the jurisdiction in which my affair was to be heard and decided anew. My wife followed me, not to console me in my troubles, but to torment me by her misconduct ; I may say that she then made me swallow the draught of bitterness to the very dregs.

"I arrived on a Sunday at M——, escorted by a dozen horsemen : I was directly conducted to the prison of the place, which was not much peopled, there being but seven prisoners there, exclusive of myself. A very tolerable apartment was assigned to me, where I made my arrangements, as if I expected to make a considerable stay. My new judges, however, did not keep me long in suspense : four days after my arrival they began to revise the proceedings of the former court. My wife took certain steps to accelerate its termination, and acted with such zeal, that judgment went in my favour.

"As she had still some remains of beauty she availed herself of them, in a manner more profitable than honourable : she formed intrigues, was in all parties of pleasure, and put so little mystery in all she did, that we became the talk of the whole town. These reports at length reached my ears : I reproached her for her behaviour : she sharply retorted, saying I was jealous, petulant, and misanthropical.

"What !" added she with the most audacious effrontery, "have you the insolence to suspect my virtue ! That is the reward of all my cares and all my fondness ! Have I merited the bitter reproaches you have made me ! If I am guilty of any crime towards you, it is for having loved you and for still loving you too tenderly : it is for having sacrificed my honour to you, that treasure which I valued more than existence, and of which, alas ! I have only the melancholy remembrance left me. Had I followed the advice of my mother, I should have been happy at this moment ! A too feeling heart has been the cause of all my miseries. This heart, when it first palpitated for you, little thought of being recompensed in such an undeserving manner !"

"As she finished this pathetic discourse, my wife began to cry and sob in so lamentable a strain, that all my fellow-

prisoners ran up to us, endeavoured to console her, and cried shame upon me for using her so harshly. I remained in amazement in the middle of this scene, fully promising myself, however, that were she to post up my name at the corner of every street, I would say no more to her, but let her have her own way. The approach of night forced her to withdraw, and to leave me tranquil once more.

"During the space of six months that my new imprisonment lasted, my wife formed no less than seventeen intrigues, one only of which made much noise in the place : I became the jest of the whole town. I will mention a few of the leading circumstances of this dishonourable affair.

"My wife occupied an apartment at an inn which looked to the guard-house, where she frequently saw an hussar officer that took her fancy. Her gestures and appearance soon convinced him that he had made a conquest : he, in consequence, returned her advances by a passionate declaration of love, which he was, before-hand, sure would be favourably received. The preliminaries being concluded, they troubled themselves so little to conceal their scandalous conduct that every one perceived it : I alone was kept awhile in ignorance. But, as no place is without a set of good-natured persons who love to inform others of what is sure to afflict them, I learned, with the greatest surprise, the backsliding of my wife. I did not believe it, and considered the report as rank calumny : presently, however, I could no longer doubt of my misfortune : a letter from the officer addressed to her fell into my hands, and I then discovered that I was at once imprisoned, hen-pecked, and cuckolded."

"This letter might have been counterfeited," said my brother Nicholas to my uncle ; "and, before giving way to jealousy, you ought to have been well assured of the fact. Calumny has recourse to all possible means, and, figuratively speaking, endeavours to discover every defect in the fortifications."

"Happily for me, and to the great regret of my wife," continued my uncle, without noticing my brother's remark, "the hussar left the place : his departure caused me the greatest satisfaction, for I have always carried jealousy to excess."

"Jealousy," interrupted my brother Nicholas, "is a tormenting passion, which ought to be guarded against perhaps more than any other : for where is the use of it ? It

does not destroy the evil, it serves only to augment it : the woman who has a jealous husband, is certain, in the end, to give him cause for his jealousy, by enrolling him in the grand regiment : and after all, cuckoldom is a trifling disease ; one, as Santeuil says, which few die of, and of which many, after labouring under it for years, get the better."

"My dear Nicholas," cried my uncle, "do be quiet : I hate reflections when they are so ill placed : recollect that passage of scripture which says, that you should turn your tongue in your mouths seven times, before uttering the least syllable." My brother made no answer. After this digression, my uncle continued to relate the sequel of his troubles to the following effect :—

My Uncle gains the day, and is set at Liberty.

"As I have already told you, my wife intrigued so successfully with my judges, that at the end of six months my suspense was over. A verdict was given in my favour, with ample damages, including all the costs and expenses I had been put to, and I was immediately liberated from confinement. My first step was to return thanks to my *enlightened* judges. Two days afterwards I left the place for Paris : the persons whom I went to see, congratulated me on the success I had met with, and added, that they had never doubted the issue of the business. I thanked them for their good opinion, fully persuaded at the same time, that if my condemnation had been confirmed, they would have been the first to approve of it.

"My wife went with an air of triumph to visit all our acquaintances, whom she took care to inform that it was wholly by her means I had escaped so well, and that had it not been for her, I was irretrievably ruined. These observations were repeated to me, but I paid no attention to them. I was busily employed in accelerating the payment of the damages and costs that had been awarded to me. I have just obtained a final judgment, fixing the sum I am to receive : and when the matter is fully settled, I will retire to my country-house, where, after so many toils, I hope to enjoy repose from the crosses I have experienced in life.

"I am now verging to my seventieth year, my dear nephews, and I think it high time for me to quit a world,

where I have constantly tormented myself, to perform a part, in which I have never been able to succeed. May my life serve you as an example ; and should ambition ever stimulate either of you to attain celebrity or riches, let the recollection of your misfortunes incline you to moderation and content. If the recital I have made you has afforded you pleasure, I will gladly revise it, and leave a copy of it to each of you."

On finishing these words, my uncle said to my brother Nicholas, "You have promised me to relate your adventures : I hope you will keep your word, and that to-morrow evening you will begin the narration." My brother having acquiesced with this invitation, the meeting was fixed. After which, we all three went out together to the coffee house ; where, having refreshed ourselves, my uncle drew from his pocket a treatise on the virtues of Indian corn, and was preparing to read it over to us, when the clock struck eleven. The waiter came to tell us they were obliged to shut up the house at that hour, and politely begged us to withdraw. We separated for the night, renewing our promise of meeting at the time and place appointed the following evening.

My Uncle dies.

My uncle's purpose in making this appointment, was less to listen to the recital of my brother's adventures, than to treat us with a long moral that he regarded, as he told us, as the *compendium* of his life ; at least, with respect to the instruction that he pretended we should gather from it. I felt but little inclined to hear one of my dear uncle's moral dissertations. Nicholas had no greater desire than myself, and we had agreed to divert him from his intention by all means in our power.

We had just retired to our bed-chambers to enjoy the sweets of repose, when we were suddenly alarmed by a noise on the stairs, and a voice crying out, *Charles ! Nicholas ! come down stairs quickly : your uncle is dying !* At first, we thought we were dreaming ; but, presently the repetition of the summons and the noise we heard at our doors, permitted us no longer to doubt that some dismal catastrophe had happened. We hastily huddled on our clothes, and ran along five or six streets that separated our apartments from those of my uncle. The light that we saw

in his chamber, he having from economy gone to bed for the last twenty years in the dark, the several persons running up and down the stairs, confirmed our fears.

We entered precipitately :—what a melancholy scene ! a poor wretch struggling in vain with death, almost suffocated by a violent apoplexy, his eyes haggard and appearing to be starting from his head, his features altered, his neck swelled, and his face extremely red. Two immense rolls of paper lying on his night-table : I read the titles of them : one was, *Treatise on the abuse of blood-letting* : the other, *Considerations relative to a tax on spectacles*. We scarcely knew him who, two hours before, seemed likely to live twenty years longer. Nicholas and I looked at each other mournfully, and then contemplated our relation in pensive silence. He intently observed us for some time, without appearing to recognize whom we were : at length, he recollected us : he shook his head two or three times, as much as to say, *It is all over with me !*

The nearest surgeon arrived out of breath, holding a lancet in one hand and an emetic in the other : he hesitated a moment which of these two specifics he should employ ; then, coolly placing the emetic by the bed-side, he seized the arm of the patient, and prepared to make the usual incision. I followed with my eye this son of Esculapius : he seemed still irresolute : at last, shrugging up his shoulders, and opening his lancet with a flourish, he pricked the vein with the same air that a gamester stakes his last piece on the table.

The bleeding appeared to us to have produced a good effect, the patient soon after recovered the use of his speech. The first use he made of it was to swear at the surgeon, who, he said, had been such an ass as to bleed him in an indigestion. Then, addressing himself to us : “ My dear nephews,” added he, “ I shall die of this attack, thanks to that fellow’s ignorance : let my misfortune teach you prudence. If you are ever taken ill, do not call in any member of the faculty : it is painful enough to die, without their adding to your sufferings.”

At first, Nicholas and I considered this language as arising from his natural tendency to contradiction ; but, unfortunately, he had calculated with more justice than the surgeon : it was, when too late, acknowledged that his disorder was truly an indigestion, in which bleeding was the death-blow. The professor stood near the bed, to be an

eye-witness of the effect to be produced by his baneful operation: he held the patient's arm, his finger pressing the artery and anxiously counting the motions of the pulse. He seemed for a while plunged in a profound meditation; his air and the movements of his head were omens by no means favourable. After some time, he let go the unnerved arm of his victim, took up his hat and cane in silence, and bowing with a gravity which at any other time would have excited our merriment:

"Gentlemen," said he, addressing us, "there is my fee of five shillings for bleeding."

"Your fee!" cried my uncle who overheard him: "do you mean to say I shall recover?"

"Sir, I have done my duty; let us hope that nature will second my efforts. All the symptoms prescribed bleeding, the practice as well as my conscience acquits me, and if it should occasion your death, the fault will not be mine."

"How, if it occasion my death! You are not then perfectly satisfied of the propriety of your proceeding?"

"Gentlemen," said the surgeon, turning toward us, "I leave the patient to your care: I will call on you to-morrow." And he left the room, muttering between his teeth: "the neck swelled, the eyes prominent, the face the colour of scarlet, Galen himself would have bled him. It is not my fault."

When the attendant saw that the die was cast, and that no hope was to be entertained of our uncle's recovery, she thought it her duty to prepare the unfortunate patient for the difficult passage from this world to the next.

"You ought, dear sir," said she, "at this awful moment to have recourse to the clemency of the Lord above. The remedies of the soul are at all times salutary, and will not prevent those which may be administered to your body. Would you have me send for the good curate of Eustace?"

"A priest!" cried the dying man with a terrified air. "A priest!—two minutes after the surgeon!—Ah, villains! You wish to hurry me out of the world before my time."

"My dear sir, if you would but consider——"

"I do consider: I can think of my last hour the same as when I was in perfect health. Priests and surgeons are good for nothing while one is well, and when one is sick, they are only useful to one's heirs."

"These are not the words of a christian : I am shocked at them. If you believe in God——"

"I must believe in priests."

"But, sir, they are his holy ministers."

"Yes, as doctors are the ministers of health. However, I have already made a full confession to my nephews."

"But they are not priests."

"Impertinent creature ! you have the soul of one, since you put a dying wretch to the torture. Away, or be silent !"

I saw that the attendant would lose her pious exhortations, and therefore made signs to her that she should say no more, but suffer our uncle to die in peace. This woman was endowed with a feeling heart : she turned away her head to conceal the tears that moistened her cheek, and looking at us with a sorrowful air, she said in a tone still more sorrowful : "Ah, gentlemen ! the poor man will be damned !" I shrugged up my shoulders, and Nicholas giving her a look of disapprobation, she held her tongue.

The animated dialogue that had taken place between her and my uncle, had quite exhausted the latter : for nearly two hours he continued almost immoveable, in a state of languor that seemed to announce a speedy dissolution : at the end of that time, he was a little delirious. All his plans of finance crowded into his imagination : he spoke of his project on potatoes, of his universal registry of lands, of his calculations on the *net produce*, and his fingers mechanically following the wandering of his reason, he formed cyphers and reckoned numbers on the sheet, which, in a short time, was to descend with him to the grave.

Nicholas, with his eyes fixed on the bed of death, was about to commence a melancholy discussion on the strange effects of delirium, when our uncle suddenly recovered the use of his senses. He called for a glass of water to moisten his mouth. The attendant eagerly ran to obey him. He took the glass with a trembling hand, and looking earnestly at the woman : "Swear," said he to her, "swear that this is not holy water !" Nicholas and I could not avoid bursting into a loud laugh at this singular apostrophe : our uncle was not much hurt at our behaviour, and after drinking, he said to us : "Do you think that if it had been holy water, I should have escaped my destiny ? No, my friends," added he, "death will take no denial. When on the scene

of the world we have once played our part, we must say with Rabelais : *Drop the curtain, the farce is over.*"

These words of our uncle induced us to renew our laughter, while the attendant devoutly made the sign of the cross on her breast. The smile that animated the patient's countenance at this sally was the last. His weakness increased every moment : he was sensible of his situation, and did not dissimulate that he was approaching the end of his career. "My dear nephews," said he in a low voice which was frequently interrupted, "in a few hours I shall exist no longer : but I wish to die as I have lived, and turn every instant to advantage. My will is made : I have foreseen everything : you will not have to go to law about it. I might very well have spared myself this last trouble, since there is neither land nor money in question. I know by experience that your lawyers are averse to enter into discussions, the bottom of which does not present, at least, the probability of handsome pickings : but I am acquainted with the age : the most insipid manuscript is now-a-days a sacred treasure. Why, I was lately witness to a greedy heir who took up the time of the court for the sake of a few obscene pages which he called his property, his daily bread, and the glory of his family. I have, therefore, taken the greatest care in dividing between you my numerous productions, so as to satisfy you both, and to prevent the possibility of a dispute. I was unwilling that the labours of genius, the fruit of the most astonishing conceptions, the result of the most profound calculations, should be considered as waste paper. You will find, my dear nephews, my last will in respect to them in the box that you see on my bureau.

"An object of greater importance now engages my attention, and I believe it could never have been mentioned at a more seasonable moment. You must very well know, that for the last eight years funerals have been conducted with the most disgusting indecency. I allude not to the disuse of processions : I do not like farces after tragedies : but I complain of the speculations lately made on hearses, mourning coaches, and other funeral carriages. The authors of these intrusive conceptions have not a single new idea—. Ah ! my nephews, what affliction for me to die before having published and seeing adopted the notions I have conceived on this subject ! My plan assured twelve millions a year to government, a small sum to the next of kin of

every insolvent person, and to all the world a commodious vehicle, and, in short, whatever can be desired to perform with honour the last journey.

"My dear nephews, bring me those papers which you see on the drawers, those tied together with a black ribbon."

Nicholas and myself were obliged to obey our uncle, though we could not avoid testifying our surprise to each other, to see him occupied with his chimerical projects to the very last moment. We gave him the roll he had asked for.

"Good," said he, "this is it! It cost me a month's labour, day and night—so much pains, and to die without reaping the fruits of them! You will be more fortunate than your uncle, my dear nephews; you will live to see my ideas realized—you will——."

At this instant a violent shock prevented him from concluding the sentence he had begun, and we witnessed the melancholy spectacle of his death a few minutes afterwards.

My Uncle's Surgeon.—Dissection of a projector's perioranium.

THE pious attendant lost no time in laying out the defunct in a decent manner; then sprinkled the body, the sheets, the bed, my brother and me, not forgetting herself, with holy water, and prepared to enwrap the deceased in his winding-sheet. We were sorrowfully occupied in turning over the treatise on funerals, and dropping a few tears to the author's memory, when the door of the apartment suddenly opened. The surgeon who had performed the unlucky bleeding first entered, shewing in the other two gentlemen dressed in black with enormous perukes well powdered, their hats under their arms, and gold-headed canes in their hands; all three approached us, bowing most profoundly, with the utmost gravity.

We fancied we saw three messengers from the other world. At sight of the ignorant pretender who had accelerated my uncle's death, I could not retain an emotion of indignation.

"What, sir!" said I to him, "do you venture to appear here again?"

"Sir, I conceived the patient must be dead."

"He is, and for that very reason——"

"If so, sir, I cannot be considered as intruding, neither can these two gentlemen, who are physicians of the first eminence. The defunct having taken leave of the world rather abruptly, and contrary to all the known and established rules, I owe it to my profession, I owe it to my reputation, I owe it to yourselves, to discover by what unforeseen cause, Nature and Galen have been found to disagree. I have brought my instruments and these two unexceptionable witnesses, *illustrissimi doctores*, for the purpose of convincing the whole universe that if your uncle is dead, there is nothing in the event but what is very simple, highly natural,—*omnes sumus mortales*. Medicine alone is immortal."

On hearing this, the two doctors made a profound bow, approving by their silence the surgeon's singular harangue.

At first, I was tempted to send the trio about their business; but the hope of confounding the impudent practitioner, who requested leave to open the body, induced me to consent to the operation. However, I thought it my duty previously to ask him a few questions.

"Have you any idea of what may have caused this sudden death?"

"Any idea, sir! I *know* it was an indigestion."

"Is it usual to bleed the patient in such cases?"

"*Non licet inter nos*," said he, looking at the two physicians: "surgery must not encroach on medicine."

"Certainly," cried the medical pair, as if in concert.

"But, sir," said I, in an angry tone, "why then did you presume to bleed my uncle?"

"Softly, sir: there was not a moment to lose: I was obliged to play double or quits. Besides, I literally followed the doctrine of symptoms;—starting eyes, the neck swelled, the face extremely red,—gentlemen," added he, turning to the doctors, "I appeal to you."

"It is time," replied the latter, "to proceed to the examination which we came about."

Immediately the surgeon took possession of his victim. As to me, I retired with Nicholas and the attendant to the adjoining chamber, to wait until the faculty had terminated their melancholy operation.

We had been there about two hours, when one of the two physicians came in to us, and delivered a written account of their observations. He accosted me with a gracious air, and addressed me to the following effect:—

"Sir, we have authenticated by our statement, that the surgeon in this affair has acted honourably, as well as conscientiously, and that in bleeding the patient he did what the symptoms prescribed to him. Between ourselves, I will confess to you that he has killed your relation ; but you ought rather to impute the accident to those ignorant persons who were present when he was first taken. In such a case, to have recourse to a surgeon is to hasten the fatal blow : Nature almost always avenges Medicine for the injustice direct and indirect that is done her. The surgeon is to the physician what the cannon is to the engineer ; he is an instrument of death of which we alone have the proper direction.

"One great motive for consolation for us in this unlucky conjuncture is, that it has afforded us the opportunity of making several observations new, curious, interesting, and which will, doubtless, turn to the profit of the human race ; you will find them detailed in the statement which I have the honour to present you."

The doctor retired after advising us if we should ever be unwell to avoid the surgeons, and consult the true disciples of Hypocrates : he accompanied this invitation with half a dozen cards which he handed to me, and on which were written his name and address.

I had given to Nicholas the statement of the medical trio : he had scarcely cast his eyes on it, when he burst into a loud laugh, at which I could not help feeling a little displeased ; and upon asking him the cause, in a tone of dissatisfaction,—“Look at this,” said he, “and be serious if you can.”

The paper that he gave into my hand was entitled the *head*. It was conceived in these terms :

“The head, as far as regards the exterior, offered nothing remarkable to our observation, except that the skull appeared to be of a more than ordinary size : the skin of the forehead was extremely thick, and from that circumstance, *incapable of blushing* : the deep wrinkles over the brow induced us to believe that the *subject* had been much occupied during his life with *abstract meditations*, which frequently forced him to raise his eyes towards heaven, as it happens to those who endeavour to discover new truths or unheard-of combinations : the hair was thin and very white, an effect resulting, as we judged, from *constant application*.”

“We next proceeded to the opening of the *cranium*.

"The bones forming the frame-work were very hard and thick : from that, we concluded that the subject must have been very tenacious in disposition, and *extremely obstinate*.

"The hinder part of the brain was of a consistence approaching that of flint, and all the sinews springing from it were almost ossified from one extremity to the other : from this, it appeared to us impossible that the subject was ever susceptible of what are called *affections, sentiment, pleasure, pain* : in a word, that he lived nearly in a state of *insensibility*.

"The skull, vast as it was, contained but very little brains, united in a small compact mass, the exterior surface of which was cut facet-wise, like a multiplying glass. If we were permitted to believe with certain learned anatomists, that our ideas make the same impression on the brain that exterior objects do on the eye, we should from thence conclude that the subject must have conceived the same idea many thousand times, and thought himself rich in the bosom of poverty.

"We were enabled, by an attentive examination, to discover that the iris of the eye was covered with slight lineaments, which, in their whimsical forms, presented the shape of all our arithmetical figures, and of a considerable quantity of small circles, which might be taken for cyphers. An eye thus constituted must necessarily have seen in every object figures and calculations.

"The lacrymal glands were almost imperceptible : the subject, perhaps, never shed a tear in his life.

"The jaw, which was greater and stronger than is usually seen in the human race, had still its two and thirty teeth sound and entire. We observed four *incisives* and two *canines* more than ordinary, and which were in the place of six grinders.

"The tongue, large and fleshy, appeared to us to owe its augmentation of size and consistence, to the great use that the defunct made of that organ during his life.

"The tongue presented a phenomenon more wonderful than all those which had struck us in the course of our professional career. After having loosened it from its ligatures and attentively examined it, we placed it on a newspaper which happened to lie on the table. It had scarcely touched the print, when it became considerably agitated. We changed its situation, upon which it resumed its dormant state : laid on the journal again, its motion returned.

Incapable of explaining so novel and singular a fact, we examined the paper that had produced such extraordinary effects. It was dated in the month of *Vendémiaire*, in the year four : among other things, it contained several decrees and projects relative to the finances, also an article on economy, published by Saint A——n. We leave it to the faculty to decide whether the appearance we have just noted was not a sort of galvanism, or whether we ought not rather to be led to admit the existence of a new fluid which might be called sympathetic."

The remainder of this singular statement appeared to me no less curious, but I postponed the reading of it until another opportunity. Nicholas and myself thought only of rendering the last duties to the sorrowful remains of our uncle : we left the attendant in tears and on her knees by the side of the death-bed, and went to give orders respecting the funeral.

My Uncle's Interment.

"**LIFE** and death are now estimated at their true value. The infant pays nothing at his entry into the world, the little slave puts on gratis the length of chain that fate condemns him to wear ; but it is not thus with him when the hour of his exit arrives. Formerly, a poor man at his death paid, out of the little property he might leave behind him, or by the hands of his friends, for the coffin, the pall, the crucifix, the tapers, the dirges, the masses, the bell, and the parting drop of holy water : the rich, besides all these, had to pay for the mutes, the feathers, the hangings, the hearse, the mourning coaches and the mourners : but, at least, both the one and the other had the consolation of making a little noise on taking leave of this world, and arrived in the other well sprinkled with the water of purification, in the midst of flambeaux, perfumed with incense and accompanied by the cries, more or less pathetic, of a score of Levites who supported themselves on the donations of the public. Now all pomp is vanished : before having bidden his last farewell to his friends, the dying man finds himself generally forsaken : when dead, he is followed to the grave in silence by two or three friends, ashamed of fulfilling this last duty ; and, from the bottom of the tomb which receives his remains, he hears, almost as soon as he is placed within it, the jingling of glasses emptied by his *mourners* at the next

tavern : nevertheless, he is obliged to pay more than used to be necessary to excite the attention and compassion of the whole parish. I made these reflections in discharging the enormous expenses of my uncle's funeral : many others also occurred to me, which I shall pass over in this place.

The deceased was conveyed to his last home in a little cart, covered with a black cloth, and ornamented at each of the four corners with a frightful figure, adapted to scare away the most curious spectator : two black heavy horses were in place of the priests ; they were led by four men dressed in grey cloaks, who resembled so many hideous jailers, about to secure a state criminal in their gloomy mansions. Nicholas and I brought up the rear.

The man who spends his life in discovering projects is rarely regretted after his death : he has lived on vapours, he leaves behind him nothing but chimeras, and his memory vanishes almost as soon as they. We were convinced of this fact as we passed *la place Maubert*. A fish-woman came up, and asked me the name of the deceased. Scarcely had I told her, when she cried out : " Ah ! the poor dear man ! he is gone at last : he will neither plague himself nor us any longer." And turning to another of her own class : " Look there, neighbour," added she : " that is the great contriver of taxes who wanted every potatoe and every egg to be taxed : I have been told too as how he wrote a large book on the fish trade, but death has fished him up like another, and there is an end to his fine schemes. He was always busy with his accounts : I wonder what account he will give to his Maker." By the time we had reached *la rue Saint Victor*, my uncle's name was in every one's mouth, accompanied with a remark of reproach or contempt.

During the remainder of the way, my brother Nicholas was engaged in a very long and very learned discussion on the judgment of the people, and what is called public opinion. I suffered him to proceed without interruption, while I reflected on the trouble, the anxiety, the vexation my uncle voluntarily underwent, to obtain at last the hatred or contempt of every one.

At length, we arrived at the last asylum. It was a wide field, partly cultivated, surrounded by high walls, and guarded by a couple of fierce mastiffs, which, by their loud and reiterated barking, gave us a reception worthy of the rest of the ceremony. Two stout men took up the corpse, and by the aid of a rope descended with it to the bottom of

a deep pit. This being done, they and our four men in grey took each a quid of tobacco, and gave the *something to drink* which they asked us for its true destination.

This scene of the most perfect indifference, displayed under our eyes in a spot where several thousand of our fellow-creatures reposed in silence : the brandy gaily swallowed over the wrecks of the present generation : the six men regardlessly talking their nonsense at the brink of the grave, which waited with open mouth to receive them : the terrifying spectacle of mortality and the carelessness of the mortal, all conspired to affect me. I withdrew with a sigh, dragging away Nicholas, who, being younger and less master of himself than I, remained in a state of stupefaction at this mournful sight.

Inventory.—My Uncle's Will.

AFTER having rendered the last sad duties to my uncle, the first thing that occupied our attention was the riches of his papers, and above all, that of the will of which he had spoken to us just before he expired. We were too well acquainted with the state of his fortune to indulge any pecuniary hope from what he had left behind him. We knew that he did not possess an inch of land, that his goods were as humble as his wardrobe, and that his strong box to change its state of emptiness had long expected the famous damages and interest awarded to him in his celebrated contest. His library had appeared to us to be the most important part of his property ; but what was our astonishment to find it contain nothing, except a pile of his own manuscripts, several books of arithmetic, and the most complete, as well as the most voluminous collection of all the works relative to finance projects, decrees, laws, orders, resolutions, and other insignificant pieces, in which figures and cyphers took up at least three-fourths of the paper. Some of these books, and, among the rest, the statement of M. Neckar, were surcharged with notes in my uncle's handwriting, which seemed to us more likely to throw obscurity than light on passages difficult to be understood.

Upon opening his drawers, we found a packet of woman's clothes, which had belonged to our deceased aunt : a paper was attached to it, on which we read the following words written by my uncle :—"Madame M——'s clothes. The

first good action of her life was leaving me, by her death, these sorrowful relics."

In the inventory we observed several notes in our uncle's hand, which gave no very advantageous idea of the qualities of his heart or understanding ; but we were too anxious to come at the will to pay much attention to anything else.

At length, we opened the box in which the deceased had told us we should find his final disposition of his effects. We discovered it accordingly : it was written on two sheets of paper, properly stamped, in due form, and bound up with an enormous quantity of manuscripts. After the usual preliminaries, it ran thus :—

"And, considering that my two nephews are of very opposite dispositions, that Nicholas is more long-winded and more tiresome than a journalist, while Charles, on the contrary, is more laconic and more patient than a judge : considering that Nicholas is incapable of performing a sum in compound addition, while his brother appears to me born and summoned by nature to the study of the sciences, abstractions, and calculations, wishing to prevent between them every subject of contest and disagreement as to the disposition of my effects, I leave :—

"1st. To Nicholas, all my library, in which he will find calculations sufficient to spare him the trouble of making any during his life.

"2ndly. I leave to the said Nicholas all my furniture, linen, wearing apparel, kitchen utensils, &c. I think it but right to give to him the produce of my industry, since I leave to his brother the means of acquiring the most brilliant fortune.

"3dly. I leave to my nephew Charles, all the manuscripts bound up with this my will, on the express condition that he has them printed, published, and circulated by all possible means : that he will take the necessary steps with government to make them adopt and put in execution all the plans, schemes and projects on which I have established the fame and the fortune of my country : and as an indemnity for his trouble and pains herein, I leave him absolutely the emoluments, places, pensions, presents, gratifications,—in a word, all the testimonies of gratitude that the government will not fail to shower down on the worthy representative of him who was born for the regeneration of France.

"Reflecting, however, that governments are always ready to punish and slow to recompense, in order to place the said

Charles in a situation to wait their leisure without pecuniary inconvenience, I, moreover, leave him my *portfolios*, in which he will find a considerable quantity of choice anecdotes, observations, dissertations and the like, hereby authorizing him to print, and publish the same for his own profit and advantage. This may prove a surer way for transmitting my name to posterity than that of finance and calculation. I leave it entirely to his own disposition."

Signed * * * *

If my uncle's will was ridiculous, the titles of his projects were no less so.

The first I popped my hand upon was : *Considerations respecting a tax on dogs, cats, and canary birds.*

In this work, my uncle proved in the most irrefutable manner, according to himself, that the coffers of the state would be filled by imposing a tax on animals.

The second was, *On the establishment of a Royal Port at Paris.* After having detailed all the means of competition and all the advantages resulting from it to commerce, my uncle thus concludes, crying out with a sort of religious enthusiasm : " Yes, yes, Parisians, you will one day behold magnificent seventy-fours perform a sham fight under the windows of the Tuileries !"

Another was, on the *lucrative advantages* government might reap from *egg shells*, by establishing depôts throughout the country, where each individual should be obliged to carry the shells of all the eggs that he consumed in the course of the year. My uncle in this work pretended that the produce alone of this operation, would suffice to assure an omelet to all those who have already the good fortune to have the Rumford soup gratis.

I might here add the titles of many other of my uncle's memoirs ; but, as several of the European powers are at this moment occupied with similar projects, I should not be able to boast of originality, and might perhaps be accused as a satirist.

After having congratulated each other on our legacies, Nicholas took possession of his goods and I of my waste paper. I have, however, complied with the wishes of the testator : I have given his life, with his portfolio to the public, and I am now busily employed in arranging his financial projects for the press.

MY UNCLE'S PORTFOLIO.

On the Language and Manners of the Parisians of the eighteenth century.

THE French language of 1760, is not that of 1801. The revolution has engendered a thousand words: Citizen Mercier adds three thousand; so that, upon a fair calculation, we are the legal proprietors of four thousand words. Her language was formerly accused of being a proud beggar; surely, this reproach can now no longer be made.

In the present day, a French work frequently requires to be translated into French in order to make it understood. The rage now consists in making use of over-refined expressions and unknown words. Of an enthusiastical poet it is said, that his style is *volcanical*: of a vehement writer, that the *torrent of his ideas rushes with impetuosity*: in speaking of Bonaparte, he has conquered peace, and his overspreading laurel shall be her *eternal asylum*: of a man of a sportive fancy, that he is *delicious*: and these expressions are considered sublime.

The virtues yield to the graces; and he who understands play, knows the art of pleasing, and can say a thousand impertinent things with a brazen face, is worthy of the first society. A man had better be vicious than appear ridiculous, and studies more to be thought endowed with wit than probity.

Men are now killed differently from what they were formerly, in order to have the pleasure of varying their mode of dying. Mercury has taken the place of antimony, and an emetic is become a fashionable remedy.

The rage for metaphysics has acquired such universal and absolute dominion, that its principles are attempted to be driven by main force into the heads of the deaf and dumb. They are tortured without mercy to learn them things which are entirely useless to them. O tempora! O mores!

There were never less metaphysics and more metaphysicians than at present. Every one calls himself the disciple of Locke or Cordillac, yet hardly any one takes the trouble of reading those authors. Wit is handed about like a snuff-box or a newspaper: ridicule has driven out sentiment, and a miserable jest is applauded and preferred to the finest thought.

Men of the most humble talents aim at obtaining celebrity ; and, to ensure success, they patronize themselves by all learned and literary societies, from whence they receive pretended passports to immortality.

Publications of all sorts multiply, but what is more strange, they all find readers : the constant demand at market encourages the growth of the commodity.

The names of certain authors are the passports of their works : absurdities which, from any other would excite contempt, become under their pens compositions of taste and genius, and those who do not admire them, are not worthy of being heard.

In order to give more extensive ideas of the manners of the capital, we shall here transcribe the Countess Biribi's letter to her sister.

The Countess Biribi's Letter to her Sister.

"WHAT a charming place is Paris ! what a land of gaiety ! I can hardly persuade myself of the reality of what I see and hear. Always agreeable surprises ! always novelties ! a friend you meet with in the morning, is no longer the same person in the evening ; neither in language nor dress, in look or behaviour : the least trifle is metamorphosed into an air of consequence ; the least event into a wonderful circumstance, the smallest incident constitutes an epoch.

"What an abundance of wit in this charming city ! but it is a sort of wit that neither you nor I understand, that all other people are ignorant of, and which consists in saying the most singular things* with a view of inspiring gaiety, inventing a thousand new modes and putting them in practice, creating original expressions† and making them pass current, learning all sorts of attitudes and tones, and ridiculing the awkwardness or ignorance of others.

"Every hour produces something new in the literary

* The Countess might have said, *the most stupid things*. When a Parisian has given what he calls a *bon mot*, an epigram, or a *double entendre*, he is the first to applaud what he has said, and not unfrequently has the laugh entirely to himself.

† For want of ideas, the modern writers invent new expressions. The language of Racine, Boileau, Voltaire and Rousseau is too poor to express their sublime conceptions : they require longer and more sonorous words : it would be an injustice to their works to confine their epithets to any known or acknowledged form of grammar or custom.

world, and this is generally a novel or romance without make or shape : they seem almost all to run in the same mould. Probability is entirely disregarded : their authors strive to astonish ; but, unfortunately, they excite no other sentiment than contempt.

"There is not one among this crowd of writers who is unanimously praised and admired : one half of the nation is passionately fond of a work, which is turned into ridicule by the other.

"I have for the last two or three days been collecting a part of the modern pamphlets : it would be impossible to read over the whole. The titles alone might form the subjects of several comedies. They contain nothing but continual repetitions of what has been said for these hundred years, with the exception of a little gloss of philosophy which is incorporated with them : invectives against certain individuals, projects respecting the amelioration of unfertile districts and the finances, together with learned and tiresome discussions on political economy. They are all more or less interlarded with chemistry, for chemistry is everywhere in vogue. Our Mount Vesuvius is in a less state of fermentation than the head of a Parisian.

"The sentiments vary the same as the fashions. A month is fully sufficient to acquire a new friend, as a week is a long time to be constant to one mistress.

"I have been obliged to tell all those I have seen my name, my place of abode, my family, from whence I came, whither I am going, and almost where I shall die : for, however little you appear reserved, you are looked upon as an adventurer : and this mistrust is carried so far, that even the Frenchman who is travelling in France is frequently suspected by his countrymen, who always believe the contrary of what he says to be the fact.

"The women speak the whole day without saying anything, which is what is called, possessing wit. They are agreeable, if caprice has any charms. They make *fainting parties*,* just as a card party is made, and they often interrupt loud bursts of laughter to complain of a pain which they fancy they feel.

"There is no country on earth where *nothings* are so prettily said and done : turn your eyes where you will, you

* The *fainting parties* are less numerous than formerly ; the women are now content with shrieking, which they do with all their might ; a method much more encouraging than the other.

meet with knick-knacks, the delicacy and elegance of which are characteristic of the taste and genius of the nation ;

"Knick-knacks on the mantle-piece,

"Knick-knacks on the clothes,

"Knick-knacks on the head,

"Knick-knacks on the neck,

"Knick-knacks in the hats,

"And knick-knacks in the manners.

"I have the greatest difficulty to dress myself fashionably ; for if my seamstress is the least dilatory, the mode is gone by, and, consequently, my robe is old-fashioned.

"The mode is a continual rotation, a perpetual flux and reflux. The quickness of the understanding, and the elegance of the taste is observable in every article of dress or furniture. There are persons of both sexes who have no other profession than that of imagining methods of refining taste and voluptuousness, and they are known, esteemed, and cried up, as if they laboured day and night to save their country. An elegant tailor, an ingenious perfumer, a skilful hair-dresser, I should say wig-maker, and a good cook, that is, one whose imagination is inexhaustible, are considered as wonderful beings, whose names are as famous as the most celebrated authors.

"Some persons exclaim against religion only because it is ancient. It would be delightful were it but a week old ; for, as one of the poets says ;

'Tis novelty they ask, and ask no more.

"The games of chance may vary with the times. *Brelan* has been succeeded by *Bouillote* : *Trente et quarante*, by *Roulette*.* In a few months others will, doubtless, be invented, because *ennui* is the most dreadful of diseases, and because *ennui* is the offspring of uniformity.

"In short, all here is *nothing*.

"We talk about *nothing*.

"We dress with *nothing*.

"We are busied about *nothing*.

"We are angry for *nothing*.

"We are friends again for *nothing*.

"Great expenses are incurred with *nothing*.

* This game is literally a cut-throat. A man is entirely ruined in the twinkling of an eye : there is not the torment of suspense to rack him. The banker and his associates are the only gainers : all the chances are for them.

* A man voluntarily marries a woman with *nothing*.

"The wits reduce their soul and their religion for *nothing*.

"And, since I have become Frenchified, I write to you of *nothing*.

"I should have been glad to have had you with me a few days ago, the scene was laughable. An agreeable fellow* that I had never seen before, suddenly came up to me in the room where I was. He accosted me, bowed with an air of the utmost freedom, praised me, and made me a thousand offers of his services: I arose from my seat; he did the same: I went out, he followed me: I walked to the Tuileries, he accompanied me: he became my shadow, until at length, approaching my ear, he made a downright declaration of love in two words.† I burst into a laugh, he laughed also: I turned from him, and a minute afterwards he had disappeared, and I saw him no more. *Questo è ben francese, è non se vede mai in Italia*.

"I am pursued in the gromedades, as if my figure was not human, and this also is the fashion of the country. But what is much more singular, is that the greater part of the spectators ogle me through a glass, as if their sight was defective. The eye-glass gives an air of importance, and your Frenchman neglects nothing that may make him appear important.

"I shall not say anything to you of meals: they are delicate, and dinner-parties are now universal. Some woman of fashion who fancies she has an agreeable voice, or two or three professed wits, usually take upon themselves to amuse the company. After dinner, cards are introduced, and, not unfrequently, the guest pays a hundred times over for what he has eaten and drunk.‡

* I know not how to qualify with the epithet *agreeable* a pigmy being, a coxcomb from head to foot, dressed like a groom, breeched to the breast, six inches of a waistcoat, lounging in a coat as if in a sack, his hair cropped close to his neck like a galley-slave, grinning at everything, spluttering a thousand impertinences with a tone of self-sufficiency, addressing the women with vulgarity, the men with insolence: in short, uniting in his diminutive person every defect and not a single virtue.

† The declarations of love of our young men are pleasant enough: here is one for example. "Mademoiselle, you are killing, I love you with fury: I can no longer exist without you, 'pon honour; suffer me not to languish, for I hate waking. I am persuaded beforehand that you love me to excess: my conquest is truly precious, for I pass for a delicious divine man——."

‡ The tea-parties have now replaced the supper-parties: the fashion is not to sup at all.

"Such is the life that I have led for the last three months, and that I should find insipid if it were not enlivened by that flux and reflux of beaux which are continually coming and going, and whose actions are not unlike those of wire-puppets. They enter singing, they exeunt with a whirl, and all about them, even their very looks appear artificial.

"Adieu, my dear sister, I love you most affectionately, although it is quite unfashionable here to love one's relations, &c."

Different manners of seeing.

MALLEBRANCHE sees all things in God.

A woman sees all things in her lover.

The banker, the broker, and the contractor see all things in gold and silver.

The lover sees all things in his mistress.

The landlord sees all things in the approach of the quarter-day.

Every one has a centre to which his mind is attracted, and to which all his actions, and all his thoughts have a reference.

So many classes of men, so many different manners of seeing. *Tot capita, tot sensus.*

Of the charms of our native country.

THE Laplander, brought from home into the finest regions of the south, regrets the deserts, the rocks and the snows which surrounded him at his birth, languishes awhile, and dies.*

The banished man is incessantly praying for an opportunity of again seeing the city, the village or the cottage in which he was born. The wonders that he sees in other countries† catch his attention for a moment, but do not affect his heart: he sighs after the lowly mansion which

* *Nescio qua natale solum dulcedine cunctos ducit. Ovid.*

† I have seen the Belvedere Apollo and the Laocoon. These two master-pieces of art have for an instant excited my admiration; but not my sensibility! Ye plains of G* * * how much more agreeable should I have found the sight of you! But I have lost for ever the hope of seeing you again. Parents, whose hearts are hard as the diamond, have repulsed me from their bosom: from interested motives they have banished all sentiments of humanity and beneficence. Nevertheless, they have never given me anything, I have never asked them for anything, and yet——

witnessed the sports of his infancy. As he approaches it, his bosom heaves with sensations of delight : his imagination is flattered by agreeable recollections, he trembles, he shudders with pleasure as he oversteps the well-known threshold.

Certain philosophers have treated these delicious sentiments as absurd. Cease your vociferations, hard-hearted and unfeeling men ! all your fine reasoning will never produce a single enjoyment : they are too barren to occasion the least emotion : they will never carry conviction with them.

You call yourselves cosmopolites ; excellent ! When men no longer love anything, and are destitute of the social affections, they wish to be thought capable of loving the whole universe.

On Hats.

WE read in an old manuscript a chapter entitled, *the chapter on hats*. The author goes back to the period when they first began to be worn, and describes the different forms they underwent during a certain number of ages ; but, in treating the matter methodically, he has forgotten the subject of it ; that is to say, he has discussed it in a heavy and pompous style. However, peace be to his ashes ! and let us not disturb the repose of the dead if it be only to insult them.

I will not, in this place, enter into a long and tiresome discussion in what I have to say relating to the same subject : I shall content myself with skimming over it.

In the course of the last twenty years,* hats have experienced 375 revolutions in their form, the most prominent of which I shall notice.

They were at first worn with a single cock or corner, probably, because women were then prudent and reserved.

Two cocks afterwards ornamented the hat † a proof that the fair sex began to relax in their manners.

At length came the three-cornered hat.‡ Families now fell into disorder : husbands were rapidly enrolled in the universal fraternity.

* I have not thought it worth while to go further back at the risk of making my chapter too long and tedious.

† These sorts of hats were in the form of a boat. They are still seen now and then in Paris ; and more frequently in the country.

‡ The three-cornered hat is that which is the most generally worn, and the fashion of which promises to last the longest.

To these succeeded the hats with four corners. Women then grew absolutely shameless, and multiplied the signs of their backsliding.

This fashion did not continue long. The husbands, for decency's sake, did all they could to get rid of a token which too plainly and scandalously announced that the existence of good morals in the married state was a mere chimera of the imagination.

After this appeared the hats without any corner at all, otherwise called round hats, with large brims : corruption had then attained its height. The fair sex no longer blushed : appearances only were regarded. The form of the hat then became indifferent.

It was next found embarrassing to wear a hat under any form whatever : in consequence, they were dismissed on the head : it was sufficient to carry a little substitute under the arm* for purposes of ceremony.

Round hats afterwards came again into vogue, at first, with large brims ; then, they were pared down by degrees until nothing more than a slight trace of them was left. They are no better than half hats ; but they are admirably adapted to those who wear them, since they cover only half heads.

During the space of twenty years they were adorned in various manners : with ribbons, steel buckles, buttons and loops of thread silk, and gold.

But, enough has been said on so trifling a subject, and, without perceiving it, I am imitating my predecessor. *Diri.*

Twenty whimsical thoughts of my Father.

My father was a good sort of man, who sometimes took it into his head to think and reflect. He one night after supper entertained us with the following thoughts, which he accompanied with very long, consequently, very tiresome comments. The thoughts I have retained : the comments I have forgotten, which will not much displease the reader. As the former possess something uncommon, I will transcribe them.

* The time may come when, through long disease, our posterity may be much embarrassed to know what was the substitute here spoken of. In order to save them the torment of troubling their imaginations, we will tell them that it was a hat without a crown, with three flat angles or rather corners : it was the constant companion of the man wearing a powdered wig.

I. The world is nothing but a vast ball-room : the fools do the honours of the entertainment : they laugh, dance, and drink with the utmost thoughtlessness : the wise, on the contrary, keep concealed under masks in a corner, observing everything and saying nothing.*

II. The hospital *des Quinze-Vingts* is an epitome of the world. Nothing is known but by the feel, and that is not always to be depended upon. The hand, in groping about, frequently retires when it should advance, and advances when it should retire.*

III. Show me two women sincerely friends and who never speak ill of each other, and you will produce a wonder without parallel. A woman will tell you she is not obliged to love a woman, but a man.

IV. It is a thousand to one that we shall be re-plunged in absolute barbarism. We have so thoroughly sifted the mode in all its ramifications, so fully refined upon tastes, furniture and dress, that, fatigued, exhausted, and overwhelmed with delicacies, we shall be led to consider the restoration of the Gothic as something new, and adopt it. We are not always young. The time will come, nay, is not far distant, when we ourselves shall have become Gothic.

V. There has been in all ages the same portion of understanding, but sometimes this understanding is more diffused : such is the case at present. We have, for example, between eighty moderate men a quantity of understanding, which, divided only among six, would compose six admirable men. Thus, every one now-a-days has understanding, but no one has enough of it.

VI. Gamesters are like birds : to-day they have a beautiful plumage, and to-morrow they are moulting.

VII. All day at tea, what gluttony ! all day on a sofa, what idleness ! all day gaming, what martyrdom ! all night dancing, what folly ! Nevertheless, mankind is almost wholly included in these four classes : they are either epicures, idlers, gamesters or fools.

VIII. The best dinner-party is only good in proportion as it is enlivened by agreeable conversation. If nothing be said, there is no difference between the table and the manger. Every one present becomes the statue in *Don Juan*.

* According to my way of thinking, the wiseacres do not play a very amusing part, and I prefer that of the fools, foolish as it may be. *Trahit sua quemque voluptas.*

* This thought of my father's may seem to some readers a little paradoxical,

IX. Men of letters fight duels as well as men of the sword, but one is much less serious than the other. When I see a couple of authors at open war, methinks I behold two persons fencing with tooth-picks.

X. A man in favour is always labouring under a dangerous malady : he ought every moment to be expecting the stroke of death.

XI. What an age is the present ! How replete with phenomena and honours ! how stained by indelible crimes ! Would not any one have passed for a madman who, sixty years ago, should have predicted what has since happened ? Ages succeed each other like the seasons ; but will the present ever be paralleled ! and if so, would not men become tigers and leopards ?

XII. *Mimi* has a curious little face : the different features seem as if they were not made for each other. But, is it *Mimi's* fault that her face is made of patch-work, when she had twenty fathers instead of one !*

XIII. Love is nothing but a coin which passes current everywhere. A woman says to each of her lovers, supposing she has a dozen, I adore *you* only in the whole universe : a man says as much to each of his mistresses. Things being at this pass, no one is deceived.

XIV. A kingdom is an equipage : the ministers are the wheels ; the people, the horses ; the sovereign, the coachman.

XV. Ancient words are respectable, because they sprang from the use of the necessities of life : modern ones are ridiculous, because they arise from the introduction of superfluities.

XVI. There is no people on earth that does not resemble certain animals : here they are parrots, there monkeys : here tigers, there oxen : here squirrels, there hedgehogs.

XVII. *Author* was formerly a title, now it is a trade. A manuscript is put up for sale, in the same manner as a pair of shoes.

XVIII. Modern publications resemble those figures that the frost traces on our windows ; breathe upon them, and the objects disappear.

XIX. Our forefathers spoke well and thought still better : the present race speak ill and do not think at all.†

* My father was sometimes a little satirical. He hated irregularity, and was a bigot to order and method.

† My father is wrong : no age has ever thought so much ; every-

XX. To offer a work to the booksellers, is like presenting colours to a blind man. They live in the midst of their books, like eunuchs in a seraglio.*

The ruling passion.

SUCH is the variety of prerogative peculiar to mankind, which we call *Reason*, that of itself it corresponds to all the diversity of the instinct observable in the amiable creation. Thus, under the biped form of man, there is no inhabitant noxious or innocent of the air, the forest or the water, that you may not recognize.

There is the wolf man.

The tiger man.

The fox man.

The mole man.

The swine man.

The sheep man, and this is the commonest of all.

There is the eel man : grasp him as tight as you please, he will slip through your fingers.

The shark man, who devours everything.

The serpent man, who twines about in a thousand different manners.

The bear man, with whom I am by no means displeased.

The eagle man, who soars above the clouds.

The raven man, you know him by the smoothness of his language.

The hawk man.

The man of prey.

A man who should have no other qualities than those peculiar to the human race, would be a rarity indeed : we have all, more or less, defects which are universally stigmatized in the brute creation.

Accordingly, so many men, so many different cries or languages.

There is the language of nature : we hear it when Sarah,

thing has been analysed. The art of thinking has become fashionable; down to the very works of mere amusement, all is interspersed with reflections, bad it must be allowed. A nation that is corrupt can never conceive thoughts worthy of being divulged.

* It very often happens that the colours presented to them are a little tarnished : a reason for their refusing them. What are offered are sometimes brilliant, by which their sight is dazzled and they are deceived in their value. The booksellers, however, know their trade : they take only what they think will sell, and they are in the right. The public taste is alone to blame.

speaking of the sacrifice of her son, says, *God would never have required it of his mother.*

When Fontenelle, witness of the progress of incredulity, says, *I should like to live sixty years longer, to see what it would come to in that time,* he really spoke after his heart: he wished to live so long.

There is the language of passion, and it may be distinguished in the poet, when Hermione says to Orestes: *Who told thee so? when to,—they shall meet no more,* Phædra replies: *they will never cease to love:* when at the end of an eloquent charity sermon, a miser says: *this will encourage begging:* when a mistress, surprised in the fact, says to her lover: *Ah! you love me no longer, since you rather believe your eyes, than what I tell you:* when the usurer at the point of death, says to the priest who is exhorting him: *I cannot in conscience lend more than a hundred crowns on this crucifix; it is full as much as it is worth.*

What a variety of tones! how many discordant cries in the forest called society.

This says to the priest who announces to him the visit of his God: *I know him by the animal he bestrides; it was thus he entered Jerusalem.*

That, less satirical, spares himself in his last moments the troubling to the exhortation of the vicar who had administered the usual ceremonies, by saying to him: *Can I do you any further service, sir?* This is the language of the disposition.

The monkey man is indefinable: he has all sorts of cries at command. The step you speak of may be of service to you, but it will ruin your friend.—Well! *I cannot help that.* But consider, a friend! *Why, yes; but, charity begins at home.* Do you think, sir, that she wishes you to be of the party? *What care I whether she does or not, so as it suits me to make one!* This is the language of the selfish man.

I have entered into this agreement with you, to be sure; but, I tell you plainly that I will not fulfil it. Not fulfil it, my lord! and why, suffer me to ask your lordship? *Because I am the stronger.* The language of force is still one of the cries of nature.

You think me a villain: I defy your penetration. This is the language of impudence.

Do you like turtle? *I think it excellent, delicious! Ah! would that I were afflicted with a disorder, of which the eating of turtle would effect a slow cure!* This is the exclamation.

tion of a glutton, suffering from having eaten to excess, to his physician.

The language of man also assumes an infinity of various forms from the profession he happens to exercise : they sometimes belie the accents of the disposition.

When a medical man says : *My friend was taken ill, I attended him : he died, I dissected him* : it does not follow that he is hard-hearted.

The Abbé de Cammaye wrote a little satire as witty as it was severe, on the works of his friend Rémond de St. Marc. The latter, who was ignorant that the Abbé was the author of the satire, was one day complaining of this piece of malice to a lady the friend of both. While St. Marc, whose feelings were extremely acute, was lamenting, beyond measure, the prick of a pin, the Abbé, placed behind him and opposite the lady, made signs to her that the satire was composed by him, and ridiculed his friend by putting out his tongue. Some said that the Abbé's behaviour was unpardonable ; while others maintained that it was a mere frolic. This question of manners was referred to the judgment of the learned Abbé Fenel, from whom no other decision could ever be obtained, except that *it was a custom among the ancient Gauls to put out their tongue.*

What is to be concluded from that ? that the Abbé de Cammaye was naturally malicious ? I should think so. That the other Abbé was a fool ; I deny it. He was a man who had wasted his eyes and spent his life in erudite researches, and who saw nothing in this world of any importance in comparison of the restitution of a long-lost passage, or the discovery of an ancient custom. It is the pendant of the geometrician who, fatigued by the applauses with which the capital resounded when Racine produced his *Iphigenia*, felt a desire to read this puffed-up drama. He procured the piece, retired to a corner, perused one scene, two scenes, at the third, he threw down the book, saying, *What does all this prove ?* This is the judgment and the speech of a man accustomed, from his infancy, to write at the top of every page : *What is to be demonstrated.*

A man may appear ridiculous, but he is neither ignorant nor foolish, much less wicked, because he never loses sight of his hobby-horse.

When a monarch, who commanded his armies in person, said to some of his officers who had abandoned an attack in which they must otherwise have lost their lives without

any advantage : *Why, were you born for anything else but to die?* He spoke only the truth, though, perhaps, unwittingly.

When a company of grenadiers solicited of their general the pardon of one of their brave comrades surprised in the act of marauding, and said to him : *Let your honour give him up to us. You might take away his life : we know how to punish a grenadier more severely ; he shall not be present at the next battle you will gain !* They spoke with the eloquence of their profession. Sublime eloquence ! woe to the marble heart that is deaf to it !

But the bomb, sire ! *What has the bomb to do with the letter I am dictating to you ?—The shot has carried off the porridge-pot, but, luckily, the beef wasn't in it.* It was a king that made use of the former of these expressions, to his secretary : a soldier of the latter : but both were the language of an energetic mind : they are independent of the profession.

Muret fell ill in the course of a journey, and was taken to an hospital. He was accommodated with a bed near that of a poor wretch labouring under one of those infirmities which perplex and frequently baffle all the efforts of art. The physicians and surgeons consulted on his case. One of them proposed an operation which might have turned out either fatal or salutary. Opinions were divided. They inclined to leave the patient to the decision of nature, when one among them more intrepid as well as more unfeeling than the rest, said : *faciamus experimentum in animi vili.* This was the language of a wild beast. But, between the curtains that surrounded Muret, was heard the cry of the man, the philosopher and the christian : *Tanquam foret anima vilis, illa pro qua christus non dedignatus est mori !* These words prevented the operation, and the patient recovered.

To this variety of the language of nature, passion, disposition and profession, may be added the diapason of national manners. This is heard when old Horatius, speaking of his son, says : *that he might die,* and when the Spartans say of Alexander : *since Alexander would be a god, let him be a god.* These expressions are not characteristic of an individual, but shew the general disposition of a nation.

We might have given this article at much greater length ; but we have preferred extracting what appeared to us the most striking. To fix the attention, the mind must be cap-

tivated : it is the only method of writing if one wishes to be read.

MARRIAGE.

Opinion of my Uncle, John Joseph William Desormeaux, on Marriage.

My uncle, John Joseph William Desormeaux, is a man of great experience : he was twice married, and was twice publicly enrolled in the *honourable brotherhood*. In one of his moments of spleen he gave free vent to his gall against marriage : I was present, and here is what I can remember of it :—

“My dear nephew, I have been, and I am still a memorable victim of marriage : the evils that I have suffered are incalculable : it is necessary to have experienced them to know truly the horror of the abyss into which a man plunges by marrying. As to the second time, I confess it was, in a great measure, my own fault. However, I have pretty well atoned for it : but I am at least desirous that it should serve as an example to others, although I have not had sufficient resolution to profit by it.

“Here are some reflections which I wish you to get printed : they are of the greatest importance, and I shall receive consolation in imparting them to the public. I know they will not prevent marriages taking place as usual ; but I shall have done my duty, and my conscience will be at rest.”

My uncle then read from a paper which he afterwards gave into my hands, the reflections which are here transcribed.

“I should like there to be a noviciate in marriage before assuming the veil—too often that of blindness. How many unhappy marriages are there from a want of a more intimate acquaintance on both sides ! External appearances are very deceitful.”

My uncle paused a moment, fetched a deep sigh, hemmed twice, and thus proceeded :

“Marriage is an affair that requires the most serious consideration. Nothing so gay as a wedding, nothing so terrible as housekeeping. A wife constantly scolding or daily talking of dying without ever being as good as her word : children crying or fighting, servants stealing or get-

ting drunk, money running short, tradesmen clamorous :—such are the wheels upon which the lives of married people turn.

“If you do not love your wife, she will live for a hundred years to torment you : if you love her, she presently dies, and you are in despair :—how is one to act ?—keep single.

“Marriage is a greater tie than the vows of a monk : he has only his passions to subdue,—the husband has his own and those of his wife, who is generally possessed by seven demons.

“There is hardly a married man who does not repent of being so : there is hardly a married woman who does not wish for a second husband, and sometimes a third.

“You are told that you and your wife are to be but one ; and this is the philosopher’s stone, to incorporate two substances naturally *unincorporatable*.”

The rest of my uncle’s philippic merits no attention, and I shall, therefore, spare myself the trouble of transcribing any more of it. It consisted of hacknied complaints against the fair sex, which have neither novelty, wit, candour, nor perhaps truth to recommend them.

After he had read to the end, for I was obliged to give him the hearing, I asked my uncle if he had seen a little poem entitled, *The Merit of Women*, written by Legouvé.

“No,” replied he : “Is the author married ?”

“He is not, Uncle.”

“No ! why does he pretend to meddle with a subject he can know nothing of ? And if women have so much merit, why doesn’t he choose a wife ? None of these poets have common sense,” continued my uncle, with warmth and vivacity : “they blindly follow their imaginations, and give us their idle dreams for facts. But are his verses good ?”

“Some say they are ; others, the contrary : the general cry is, that his poem is no great thing.”

“In that case, I wish the author’s punishment for having written a bad poem, was forcing him to marry : we should then speedily hear him chant forth his recantation.”

My uncle said no more : I quitted him impressed with what he had said against the feminine gender, and promising myself that his advice should not be lost on me.

Analysis of all the novels and romances, past, present, and to come, of Citizen Ducrai Dumesnil.

A GENTLEMAN in the country lately wrote to a bookseller in Paris, informing him that he was desirous of purchasing the whole of D—— D——'s novels and romances ; but, before making the purchase, which he understood would be considerable, he wished to have sent him a list and a sort of analysis of each of them. The bookseller, a little arch in his inclination, transmitted the gentleman the list as he desired, and added the following analysis. Having communicated it to me, I have thought it my duty to give it to the public, who, I hope, will take it in good part, as it is intended.

“ Cruel fortune—Barbarous destiny—Pitiless fate—Ah !—Alas !—But—I—Celestial beauty !—Why ?—How !—For—O heavens !—Gods !—Eternal providence !—My heart—My soul—Intoxicating power—Happy instant !—Unlooked for delight !—Past felicity !—Sacred virtue !—Blissful sentiments—Precious sensibility !—Beatitude—How beautiful she was !—Good young man !—Could I have hoped it !—Dreadful fatality !—Remorse in store !—My God !—Celestial powers !—Terrific vengeance !—The murmuring stream—The warbling of the feathered tribe—The tears of Aurora—The perfumes of Flora—The umbrageous groves—A pure and cloudless sky—The agitation of the foliage—Gentle Zephyr—~~—~~ ! ! ! !—.”

In this manner may be made the analysis of almost every novel or romance of the present day. With a certain number of words, notes of interrogation and admiration : reticences, sudden pauses, apostrophes, invocations, and the like, every thought, every idea may be expressed in a grand, suitable, and majestic style.

Neither is it exclusively in novels and romances that these auxiliaries are found serviceable : they are also made use of in most of our modern dramas. The authors imagine that all these invocations addressed to the Deity, these misplaced apostrophes, misplaced because no reason exists for their insertion, these ridiculous exclamations are indubitable proofs of sentiment and genius : whereas, in fact, they seldom prove anything but a poverty of ideas.

Happiness.

VARRON in his time reckoned two hundred and eighty-eight different opinions on this question: *What is happiness?*

We might now reckon a much greater number, and yet we are not a whit happier.

Who is the king of the universe? demanded Seneca. *He that has nothing to desire,* was his reply.* This idea is false. The man without desires is an inanimate, indifferent being, who can never be happy: for happiness cannot exist with apathy and indifference.

Another philosopher who heard somebody say: *It is a great happiness to have what one wishes for,* and who replied; *It is a much greater to wish for no more than one has,* was nearer the truth, since the limitation of our desires may, doubtless, prove a source of contentment.

Happiness is a series of enjoyments, and that state is incompatible with the passions of human nature.

According to Jean Jacques Rousseau, man cannot be happy on earth: the utmost he can acquire is contentment: and Rousseau was in the right. Let us endeavour then to find it, and not fatigue ourselves by running after a chimera, that has no existence but in the imagination.

But how few are there who enjoy content! The rich sigh after fresh treasures: the ambitious seek accession of honours, and the sensualists new pleasures.

Let us do well, let those who can do better, should be the maxim of those who wish to pass their lives in tranquillity and content. It may be added, that this tranquillity and content depend greatly on the manner in which we are organized, and that there are some individuals who can never procure these blessings.

More than two thousand volumes have been written on happiness, which treated chapter after chapter of this chimera, as if the subject had been a plant or a disease. Some of them have been read for the sake of their authors: others, and the far greater part, have deservedly descended from the cradle to the grave never to rise again. All the utility to be drawn from them is to stuff up the head with systems each more absurd than the others. Happiness is

An ignis fatuus that lures the eyes,
But the grasp remains insensible.

Anon.

* *Res est qui nihil cupit.* Sen.

It never has been, it never will be found, notwithstanding the opinions of certain philosophers who have thought to palm their reveries upon us for so many incontestable truths, and who have all set out with proving by their own example, that they refused to partake of a fruit which they offered to all the world.

Humanity.

HUMANITY, philanthropy, beneficence, fine words by which our ears are perpetually stunned, which are in every mouth, but by which few hearts are affected.

Implore humanity of a rich upstart : he will tell you it is a virtue impossible to be realized in society, and that to do good to any one is only to foster ingratitude.

Solicit the beneficence of a stock-jobber : he will look you in the face with a smile of contempt, will afterwards harshly refuse you, and speedily turn his back towards 'Change, in order to learn whether any opportunity offers to enrich himself still further—the means he never thinks about.

A man myself, each mortal is my friend.

A fine sentiment, beautiful in theory ; but nothing more. The hearts of mankind are shut to all the disinterested passions : every one thinks only of himself, cares only for himself in the vast universe. Man is very little to man, or rather he is nothing. He begins to become something when he may be of service to us and second our lucrative views : in all other cases, man worries man without pity or remorse.

But the fair sex, you will say, are not so unfeeling ; they are touched with compassion at the miseries of others. That may be, and yet the satire on the young lady patting her lap-dog and feeding him with biscuit, while she refuses charity to a lame mendicant seems, at least, to put the matter in doubt.*

How many women are there to whom this fable might be applied ! But it is in vain to preach : they are incorrigible.

* There are still some feeling and generous bosoms. In citing the above fable, we have only wished to point out the insensibility of those volatile creatures who faint at the death of a dog or a bird. They are in fact, afflicted at nothing, though a word makes them shudder or weep : but, should they lose a friend, even a parent, no other anxiety is observable in their behaviour than what is inseparable from the choice of the form and taste of their mourning.

But the philosopher we were mentioning—True, all his works breathe the great and noble passions ; yet, his heart is absolutely a stranger to them. Like Moses, he wishes to conduct others to the promised land, but never to enter it himself.

Nevertheless, examples of humanity and disinterestedness are to be found—Yes, but they are so rare !

Apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto.

Among this small number, here is one which deserves attention : it is not exactly new ; but of this sort there are but few modern instances. It is extracted from a Chinese history, and the hero of it is a king.

“The Emperor *Cam-hi* being one day hunting, and having strayed from all his attendants, saw a poor old man who was weeping bitterly, and seemed afflicted at some extraordinary disgrace. He approached him, affected with the situation in which he saw him, and without making himself known, asked him the cause of his sorrow.

“My sorrow ?” said the old man ; “alas, sir, if I should tell you, it is an evil out of your power to remedy.”

“Perhaps, my good man,” resumed the Emperor, “I may be of greater service to you than you imagine : inform me of the nature of your affliction.”

“Since you wish to know it,” replied the old man, “it is this :—A governor of one of the Emperor’s country-houses, finding my little property, which lies near the royal domains, to his liking, has seized upon it, and reduced me to the utmost distress. He has not stopped there : I had only one son, who was the support and comfort of my old age : he has forced him from me, and made him one of his slaves. This, sir, is the occasion of my grief.”

“The Emperor was so much shocked at this account, that, thinking only of punishing a crime committed under his authority, he asked the old man whether it was far from the place where they were to the country-house he spoke of, and the old man saying that it was not more than half a league, he told him that he would go with him to the governor, and exhort him to give up his property and release his son ; adding, that he did not despair of being able to persuade him.” “Persuade him !” replied the old man ; “ah, sir, consider, if you please, what I have just told you, that this man belongs to the Emperor : surely, it is neither safe for me nor for you to ask him such a thing ; he would only treat me the worse ; and as to you, you might receive

some insult, that I should be sorry to see happen for your compassion to me." "Do not be alarmed on my account," observed the Emperor: "I am determined to make the attempt, and I hope that our negotiation will be attended with better success than you seem to expect."

"The old man, who distinguished something in the appearance of the stranger of that nobleness visible in the looks of men of his illustrious rank, offered no further resistance: he merely objected that being worn out with age and trouble, he could not keep pace with the horse on which the Emperor was mounted. "I am young," said the prince; "get on my horse, I will go on foot." The old man could not think of accepting this offer: the Emperor proposed a medium; he desired the old man to get up behind him: the latter still excused himself, observing that as his extreme poverty had deprived him of the means of changing his clothes and linen, he could not warrant his being so free from vermin as he could wish. "Get up, my friend," replied the Emperor, "say no more; it will only be putting on other garments, at the worst."

"The old man at last did as he was desired, and they presently reached the spot of their destination. The Emperor was no sooner arrived than he demanded to see the governor, who appearing, was not a little surprised when the prince, accosting him, discovered the golden dragon that he wore on his breast, and which his hunting-dress had concealed. To render this memorable action of justice and humanity more celebrated, it happened that the greater part of the nobles who had accompanied the Emperor were present, as if it had been preconcerted between him and them; for it was before them all that he reproached the good old man's persecutor in the severest terms; and that, after having obliged him to restore his property and his son, he sentenced him to lose his head, which order was directly executed. He did more: he appointed the old man his place, advising him to take care that, fortune changing his manners, another might not one day profit by his injustice, in the same way that he had profited by that of his predecessor."*

* Our good Henry 4th, gave many proofs of his humanity which might be aptly related in this place, but all the world knows them by heart.

QUACKS.

The world has never known a want of Quacks.

PARIS alone contains more quacks than all the other parts of the republic put together : it is the only place in the universe where the profession of quackery is exercised in perfection. They are in all quarters : quacks in public places, quacks in the streets, and these are not the most dangerous : quacks in trade, quacks in religion, quacks even in the hall of Themis, quacks in the field of Mars, quacks in the arts and sciences, quacks in literature ; in short, all is quackery. It is a current coin that rapidly circulates through every class of individuals of which this vast universe is composed.

But the most dangerous class of all these quacks is the political quacks :* they overturn states and effect the ruin of empires. We have given a frightful example in the revolution ; but that will not prevent them from being listened to in future. *The world is the prey of the cunning.*

There are the philosophical quacks, who, in order to lead you into the paths of wisdom and virtue, make you traverse the broad roads of vice, by inviting you to yield to the torrent.

The chemical quacks, who are always decomposing, but never compound anything.

The mathematical quacks, who delude you with lines without length, breadth or depth.

The literary quacks, who abuse Corneille, Racine and Boileau, in order to pass off their own miserable productions.†

* Among these, M. Neckar is deserving of the palm. This banker, born for our misfortune, took it into his head to meddle with our finances : according to his promises, his projects were to raise us to the highest pitch of prosperity ; but, alas ! all his financial knowledge, while our finances were under his direction, consisted in borrowing money at an enormous interest. Our young men, without being financiers, do the same every day, not embarrassing themselves how it is to be repaid. But if this banker embroiled our affairs, he took good care to arrange his own : and now he has reduced us to beggary, he preaches up to us the folly of mundane attachments, distributes his sermons, and exhorts us to patience. Good-hearted man !

† I know certain pretended literary characters who impudently affirm in the most self-sufficient tone, that Boileau's verses are dry and barred : that Racine is tiresome and wants energy : that Cor-

The poetical quacks, who have sworn to make us acknowledge their paltry rhymes for the quintessence of poetry.

The medical quacks, who endeavour with all their might to persuade us that no disorders can be cured without the produce of other countries.

The apothecary quacks, who pretend to prove that a mixture of a few drugs becomes a universal specific.

The astronomical quacks, who strive to demonstrate that the world is the result of chance.

The bookselling quacks, who have nothing so much at heart as to sell bad books for good, rhapsodies for excellent works, and the *stuff* of Madame Ango for the offspring of genius.

The culinary quacks, who have adopted the lucrative custom of serving up cats for rabbits, tough cocks for capons, and dowager hens for pullets.

The wine-merchant quacks, who, for the best wine, sell you a compound which has no resemblance to it but in colour.

The confectionery quacks, who sell you warm water and sugar, for syrup.

The jeweller quacks, who force you to buy gilt metal for pure gold.

The tailor quacks, who assure you that a coat cannot be made without three yards of cloth, while a yard and a half are fully sufficient.*

The shoe-maker quacks, who put you in sheep for goat skin.†

Quackery of quackery ; all here below is nothing but *quackery*.

There are, moreover, several kinds of quackery not generally known : these are they which should be exposed and combated. The following anecdote may serve as a specimen of them :—

We read in the history of China, that a king of *Tsi* who was extremely partial to the musical instrument *yu*, assem-

nelle is not now worth reading, and that the Abbe Delille knows nothing of poetry. Happily, the opinion of these presumptuous men is not attended to : were it otherwise, we should be reduced to read *la brouette du Vinaigrier*, the insipidities of Iocrisse and Madame Ango.

* Cutting out is very profitable to tailors : it may be called their philosopher's stone, which is not merely ideal.

† In spite of their deceptions, there are few rich shoemakers. At present, the bootmakers alone get fortunes.

bled as many as three hundred performers whom he obliged to play together. A certain individual, named *Nan-Ro*, who understood nothing of this nor any other music, observing that three hundred men played at a time, presumed that with a little impudence, he might pass in the crowd. In fact, he was appointed and received his salary with the rest for several years. The King dying, his successor gave public notice that he liked even more than his predecessor the instrument *yu* ; but that he intended to hear every one of the three hundred play one after the other. Upon this intimation, *Nan-Ro* absconded and was never heard of afterwards.*

How many *Nan-Ro's* may be met with in the different professions !†

* See Du Halde's history of China, vol. 2, p. 473.

† We might here introduce a long commentary and a fresh enumeration of quacks, including the Robertsons, the Invisible Girls, the Aeronauts, and a thousand others. But, hush ! let us say no more ; there are dangerous quacks, and——

THE POLANDERS.

THE Sarmatians had lost a part of those barbarous customs which had caused half of the known universe to be despised by the ancient Romans. The modern Romans, fallen from their former splendour, concentrated in the capital of the Christian world, the useful or agreeable arts : under the shade of which rapidly arose religious prejudices and political ignorance,—striking and dangerous proofs of the abasement and decline of a nation.

The Popes reigned by the strength of public opinion : the Emperors of Germany supported their power by the force of arms, or by the divisions which agitated Europe : the weaker sovereigns opposed intrigue to ambition : the great vassals everywhere crushed the people : and the vulgar were born, laboured and died, to humour the caprice or pride of their unjust and ungrateful masters.

The Sarmatians, the Scandinavians, and the other more northern nations, scarcely knew anything of their ancestors, whose bravery had so long balanced the fortune of the Roman eagles ; but the Sarmatians, become Polanders, in the midst of the storms which disordered Europe, preserved that national pride, that impetuous courage, by which they were always distinguished.

According to the customs of those times, they united rude and sometimes sublime virtues, to the most shocking vices : the most heroic deeds were joined to the most superstitious ceremonies ; and Christianity to absurd or cruel customs, which had been consecrated by the blindest idolatry.

At the end of the twelfth century, the Polanders still smothered their children that were born with any bodily imperfection : they abridged the existence of the aged who were infirm : the Palatines had right of life and death over their peasants, and could not be arrested for any crime before they had been legally convicted of it.

Rape, that abuse of strength which deprives the weaker sex of the just and valuable privilege of following the dictates of the heart, was only punished with death when the female so highly outraged in her honour and affections, refused to efface, by the gift of her hand, the stain which had been fixed upon her by a ferocious passion. The spirit of chivalry alone counterbalanced these monstrous institutions, and maintained appearance of order in the midst of anarchy and barbarism.

A weak state, the different members of which, either from interest or inclination, were at variance with one another : irregular diets, were the most important affairs discussed with sabre in hand : the right of dying for the country reserved to the nobles, who alone could be said to have a country : intrepid, but undisciplined armies :—so many causes must necessarily conspire to put Poland under a foreign yoke, and she had submitted to that of the Emperors of Germany.

These haughty Polanders were become tributary to a power, that went so far as even to name the masters who were to govern them. Rodolpho, whose merit alone had raised him to the Imperial throne, and who was the founder of the house of Austria, which for so many ages has been the admiration and the scourge of the world : Rodolpho rendered less supportable the yoke under which the Polanders groaned, but which had not subdued their national character.

A Palatine, as brave and magnanimous as he was rash and jealous of his rights, powerful by the number of his vassals, by the popularity of his name, and instructed in the art of war by twenty years' experience, Metusko was the first who dared to commence the cry of *liberty*, always so dear to the Polanders.

This cry flew from palatinate to palatinate. The name of Metusko revived hope which was nearly extinguished, and inspired confidence. The people everywhere rose, they assembled, they marched without order, and valour took the place of discipline.

Several detachments of Imperial troops were beaten by men without leaders, but stimulated by the noble pride of rescuing their country. A numerous army, composed of a hundred corps which came from all parts of Poland and assembled near Caniseo, unanimously appointed the ardent and intrepid Metusko their commander.

This warrior had not solicited the honour of this arduous post ; but, feeling himself worthy of it, he accepted with a noble frankness the rank which the general esteem conferred upon him. He swore to justify it, and was faithful to his oath.

Among those who had voluntarily ranged themselves under his standard, was distinguished the young Sobieski, one of the ancestors of that famous family which afterwards rendered Poland illustrious. To the qualities which compose great men, he added a rare modesty, an extreme sensibility, and that courteous behaviour which disarms even envy of her sting.

Educated in the hatred of oppression, far from a court that his father despised, his youth was passed at the castle of Moulnicza, where military exercises occupied the greater part of his time. Every leisure moment, when he could escape observation, he employed in the secret cultivation of his mind, for fear of rendering himself ridiculous in the eyes of those who then considered ignorance as one of the attributes of greatness.

A few leagues from Moulnicza, in the castle of Blonie, lived old Polinski, the former companion in arms of the father of Sobieski. They had both covered themselves with laurels in the wars against the Turks and Hungarians ; but, the chilling hand of age had now left them only the power of forming wishes for the liberty of their country.

The two veterans often saw each other, and the same habits, the same political opinions strengthened their former friendship.

Polinski had a daughter, sixteen years of age, an enchanting figure, tall and well-shaped, a most interesting countenance, sparkling eyes, the disposition of an angel, and a tender heart :—such is the portrait of Polinska.

Sobieski saw her for the first time at that age when, the senses expanding with irresistible force, man seems born solely to love : when his heart, resembling a violent flame, communicates its heat to all that approaches it : Sobieski saw Polinska, and from that moment lived only by her, and for her. He had not declared his passion, and beauty, always observing, congratulated itself on not having been prepossessed in favour of an ungrateful object.

In one of those festivals where gaiety is united to the most rigid decency : where the sports, the songs, the dances, the tumult, and the dazzling glare of artificial lights, con-

spire to heat an imagination already exalted, and electrify a heart agitated by a secret impulse, not easily accounted for, and incapable of definition : Polinska, alarmed at a state of mind so new to her, retired from the midst of the throng, and went to seek in a solitary walk that tranquillity of the senses which the fresh air of a beautiful night seldom fails to produce. Seated on a mossy hillock, she was absorbed in reflection : while unknowing what she did, she stripped the leaves from a spreading lily, the whiteness of which was effaced by her own transparent complexion.

Nothing escapes the vigilant eye of a lover : Sobieski had seen her quit the assembly. Like her, he was tormented by a desire which constantly occupied his soul, though he had not yet set himself to consider its exact nature or tendency.

The intimacy which had lately subsisted between them, aided by the favourable obscurity, emboldened the amiable young man : he found Polinska, he fell on his knees before her, he spoke, and her whole frame thrilled with pleasure : he declared his love with that ingenuousness which is a guarantee of its sincerity. Polinska was all innocence, all confidence : she could not dissimulate, she made no answer, but let her hand fall into that of her lover.

Their fathers were transported at the discovery of an attachment which seemed every instant to augment. They had for a long time proposed to form only one family : they yielded to the impatient wishes of their children, and fixed the day which was to see them united for ever.

Sobieski and Polinska counted the hours, the minutes ; but they counted them together. Happy period, when love is nourished by hope, illusions, the caresses of innocence, and a thousand nameless delights, without doubt, less violent, but much sweeter than enjoyment, and which is not like that, succeeded by satiety and regret !

The amiable pair were walking near that retired spot, the discreet and favoured witness of their first mutual confession. Emblem of their hearts, their arms were fondly entwined, while the vacant hand of each, impelled by the same attraction, at length met, and the touch vibrated to their souls.

The animated eye of Sobieski called up the blush of modesty into the cheeks of Polinska : her natural timidity struggled with her love : like a gentle rose-bud about to blow in full perfection, which awaits, yet fears the rays of

the sun. Suddenly, the trumpet aroused the peaceful inhabitants of Blonie : its shrill sound pierced the foliage that surrounded the lovers, and interrupted their endearments. Sobieski and Polinska trembled without being able to assign a cause for their apprehension : but, when we are arrived at happiness, we begin to feel that it is only a fugitive shadow, always ready to disappoint our grasp.

Sobieski, with hasty strides left the garden : his father and Polinski were seeking him : the joy which sparkled in their eyes for a moment dispelled his alarm : an icy chillness glided through his veins on hearing these words :—

“ Rejoice, my son, Poland has at length found avengers, and the name alone of Metusko raises armies. Join without delay the nobility of the environs, who are assembling at Blonie. Go, serve your country with the same ardour as you study to please beauty, with the same success : return victorious, and the palm of glory shall be presented to you by the hand of love.”

Young Sobieski sighed as he cast a parting look on his pale, trembling and inanimate mistress. He presumed to snatch a kiss, retired in silence, leaped on horseback, drew his scimitar, and vowed to prove himself worthy of Polinska.

Rodolpho, adored by his troops, beloved by his subjects, confiding in his power, slumbered in the midst of the voluptuousness that surrounded the throne, and suspected nothing of the storm that was gathering at a distance. With the news of the insurrection of the Poles, he learned that Metusko's forces were superior to his own, and that he had created that famous *pospolite*, a body of cavalry composed of the flower of the nation, which afterwards, under the Jagellons, were sometimes defeated, without ever being vanquished.

He was also informed that the levies were made with unprecedented celerity ; that magazines were established and distributed with the greatest order ; that a plan of finance had been conceived and put into execution, a method then unknown in Europe, when the vassals followed their lords to the wars without pay or supplies, and returned to their respective homes when authorized by defeat, excessive fatigue, harvest time, or the approach of winter, according to a custom the origin of which is lost in the earliest ages.

Rodolpho, the chief of the empire, but without states,

without any direct authority over independent sovereigns, could neither raise men nor money without the assent of the different circles. He convoked a diet at Ratisbon, and while they deliberated on the demands of the Emperor, Metusko took Warsaw, drove from the throne the phantom of a king appointed by Rodolpho, stripped or dispersed his partizans, acquired every day new ones himself, and prepared to repass the Vistula, in order to march by Sandomir to meet the troops, which were sent against him from Austria by the way of Upper Hungary.

The Count of Munich, faithful to the side of the emperor, had hastily assembled the garrisons of Lencici, Iczow and Rava. He advanced by forced marches towards Warsaw, to dispute with Metusko the passage of the river, to keep him in check as long as possible, and to give time to the united bodies of the circles to enter Poland before the Palatinates, still overawed by the Imperial troops, should declare for the insurgents. If he should meet with a repulse, he intended to retire to the places he had just evacuated, before which, he had no doubt of being able to stop the progress of Metusko, until a sufficient army could be collected to make head against him.

His plan was wisely conceived, and might have succeeded if his adversary had not discovered it. The fierce Polander deviated a moment from his natural impetuosity : he appeared as if he dreaded the Imperialists : he retired within the city as soon as their archers shewed themselves on the other side of the Vistula : he began a negotiation which he soon broke off, presented himself anew to pass the river, and retreated on the first discharge of the enemy's arrows.

The German general knew the intrepidity of Metusko : his manoeuvres could not be the effect of fear : his intention must then be to engage *him* to pass the Vistula, in order that he might attack him with more advantage, in the disorder that such an operation could not fail to produce.

Munich was too inferior in numbers to hazard an enterprise of this nature. The apparent irresolution of the Poles seconded his secret designs already communicated : he, therefore, determined on his part to temporize, and encamped within a bow-shot of the river.

Metusko plainly perceived that he might easily pass it in spite of the Imperialists ; but he must experience considerable loss, and he was desirous of encouraging new troops by a brilliant exploit, which should neither be purchased

by their blood nor their courage. He had remarked, in the partial combats that had already taken place, the intelligence, the wisdom, and the bravery of Sobieski.

When the count first approached Warsaw, he had detached the young Palatine at the head of six thousand horse, with orders to coast the river as far as Plockzo, to carry the town by assault, to leave in it a thousand men as a garrison, to pass the Vistula, and with all possible expedition to come and take the Count of Munich in the rear. As soon as Sobieski should appear in the plain, he himself was to cross the river with all his cavalry, and furiously attack the Germans. Such were the motives of the vague and unaccountable conduct that he had affected for several days past.

Munich, however, was an old General, whom it was not easy to surprise : his scouts at length reported to him that a numerous corps appeared behind him, and advanced from the side of Sobaczow. The count then conceived the extent of the danger to which he had exposed himself : he knew not what this body of cavalry might be ; but resolved immediately to decamp and attack Sobieski, hoping to defeat him before Metusko should be informed of his arrival.

The German scouts had only discovered the advanced guard, and Munich was astonished to find himself opposed by a body sufficiently numerous to hold the victory a considerable time in suspense. He strove to secure it by taking an advantageous position : he drew up his army on an eminence, defended on one side by a swamp inaccessible to horse, on the other by a thick wood, in which he lodged five hundred cross-bow men : his troops, wholly composed of infantry, would be able to act in every direction, as circumstances might require, with the utmost facility.

Sobieski perceived the advantage of this position. Nevertheless, a degree of impetuosity, natural to youth, induced him to think of attacking alone, and to share with no one the honour of the victory which he flattered himself he should be able to maintain : a moment's reflection, however, brought him to more moderate sentiments : he reproached himself with having conceived the idea of sacrificing to his ambition the lives of so many brave men. He despatched several couriers to Warsaw, the approach to which was rendered open by the retreat of Munich ; and informing Metusko of his situation, demanded his orders.

This retreat itself too clearly announced that the Imperialists had been apprized of Sobieski's approach, to render

this advice necessary. The messengers of the young Palatine found him already out of Warsaw, marching in order of battle, and extending his left wing towards Czeisko, to prevent the enemy from escaping by Sandomir and Cracow, which still held out for the emperor: all other means of retreat were taken away from him by the position occupied by Sobieski.

Metusko sent orders to the young warrior to dismount the whole of his men, to leave the horses in the care of the attendants, and to attack without delay by the swamp. He expected himself to arrive soon enough powerfully to assist Sobieski, surround Munich entirely, and to put to the sword those who should refuse to lay down their arms.

Sobieski executed the orders of his commander with the valour of a soldier, and the prudence of an old general. He passed the swamp in the midst of a shower of arrows, which in truth did little injury to his men, who were all clad in armour: but when he attempted to climb the height, trunks of trees and huge fragments of stone were rolled on his troops, and overthrew whole columns.

By the intelligence and order with which Munich conducted his defence, as well as by his efforts constantly directed against him, he judged that Metusko had not yet attacked. He did not believe him capable of treachery; but, whatever might be the cause of the delay, he presently found that he must vanquish alone: he felt a secret pleasure at the idea, and prepared to carry it into execution.

It was not possible that the Germans in so short a time could have supplied every part of the summit of the eminence with trunks of trees and stones: these masses could not be easily conveyed to all the different points where he might make his attack: he therefore descended the height, marched part of the way round it with the utmost celerity, renewed the assault at another quarter, without any other opposition than from a flight of impotent arrows, came to close quarters with the Germans, and in the confusion that ensued, the scimitar, the sword and the club were raised on either side, for the destruction of Imperialists and Polanders.

Metusko was arrived at the borders of the wood which the bowmen defended inch by inch: they had thrown away their bows and quivers, and, intrenched in the bushes or behind the trees, levelled with their battle-axes the Poles who dared to approach, and who received the blow of death

before they perceived their enemy. Metusko, become furious, treated the Germans as cowards, defied them, according to the custom of those times, to combat openly ; and had the mortification to see his bravest gentlemen fall by his side, while his progress was completely impeded.

Meantime, he heard the clashing of arms and the cries of the combatants who were destroying each other on the height. Sobieski was opposed to superior numbers, and must infallibly be vanquished. Metusko, as generous as he was brave, resolved to disengage him or perish in the attempt. He took the flower of his troops, leaving only in the wood a sufficient force to keep the enemy in check, marched to the swamp, crossed it without being perceived, ascended with rapidity, and resolutely threw himself between the Imperialists and Sobieski. It was time : the only hope remaining to the young hero and his companions was to die sword in hand. The lover of Polinska had pronounced for the last time the adored name, and was about to rush on the German lances : a prodigy alone could save him,—it was performed by Metusko.

Already the soldiers of Munich had cried out victory, and were astonished to see a new army, which sprung up between them and that which they had thought completely overwhelmed. The combat recommenced with fury ; but, the fatigued Germans could give only feeble and ill-aimed blows, while a ferocious animosity, the contempt of life, and an extraordinary strength of body, rendered those of Metusko terrible and sure. His men, irritated at so long a resistance, imitated their chief, and carried everywhere terror and death.

The Polanders cried victory in their turn, and effectually secured it. What remained of the Imperialists threw down their arms and demanded quarter. Metusko added to his glory by sparing the enemies whose obstinate resistance made his triumph more glorious.

It only remained to dislodge the bow-men from the wood : he gave his orders for that purpose, but Sobieski had been beforehand. Tormented by the desire of still rendering himself useful, he had communicated his noble emulation to those who had just partaken his danger : and when Metusko appeared, he was receiving the word of honour of the commander of the bowmen, who, finding he was attacked in the rear, judged that the battle was lost and surrendered himself prisoner with his whole party.

Two warriors brave enough to be strangers to jealousy, necessarily loved each other. Sobieski admired Metusko : Metusko took a pleasure in beholding in the young Palatine, the hope of Poland and his worthy successor. He loaded him with honours on the field of battle, and lost no opportunity of giving him solid marks of his esteem and confidence.

He appointed him to command a detachment destined to attack and take the three towns that Munich had evacuated ; and after raising contributions, to endeavour to engage the nobility of the country in the common cause.

The mission was, doubtless, honourable : but Sobieski had left behind him at Blonie, more than his glory, more than his life. Before achieving fresh exploits, he burned to receive the sweetest, the most valuable approbation of his first essay in arms, a smile, a flattering word from Polinska. The interest of his country, however, prevailed over the dearest sentiments of his heart. Besides, how could he rob glory of the moments which belonged not to love !

Metusko knew only how to fight and vanquish : he had never loved, and those pains which we have never felt, seldom attract our compassion. Sobieski, therefore, reluctantly disposed himself to obedience : he wrote on the very spot on which he had fought : he wrote with that ardour, that charm, that disorder, which flows from an amorous heart as from an inexhaustible spring. His old squire, Wilfrid, who, in the battle exposed his life to watch over that of his master, set off with the precious packet, charged to say and repeat all that was not expressed in the letter, which, nevertheless, contained everything.

Let us leave Sobieski to follow the course of his conquests, advancing into Poland at the head of an army that his courage, his mildness, his winning exterior and his eloquence every moment increased ; covering the frontier, and sometimes attacking, sometimes on the defensive, defeating all the projects of the Elector of Saxony, who was endeavouring to penetrate into the country by the way of Blandebourg. We will return to Metusko, against whom Rodolpho was marching in person, by Austria, Moravia, and Silesia.

The art of conquering is of little comparative value, without a knowledge of taking proper advantage of victory be added to it. Metusko lost not a moment : his troops reposed on the field of battle : at day-break they began their

march, and this march was a real triumph. The Polanders flocked from all parts to see the hero of their country : the youth enrolled themselves under his standard : the mothers pointed him out to their children, who were yet too young to tread the path of glory : the old men overwhelmed him with praises and benedictions : the young females strewed with flowers the road along which he had to pass.

In this manner Metusko advanced as far as Blonie : he was at a little distance from it, when he perceived a great number of the inhabitants who came out to meet him, accompanied with martial music. They were headed by Polinski, bending under his heavy armour, which he had determined to resume on this memorable day.

His daughter, adorned with all that art could add to the gifts of nature, rode by his side, mounted on a beautiful palfrey, that seemed proud of his precious burden. Polinska had received Sobieski's letter : she knew she was not to see him, but she might, at least, hear his eulogium from the mouth of his general : and everything is interesting to a lover.

Metusko received Polinski as a man doubly respectable from his age and his memorable exploits. Polinska, encouraged by the flattering reception her father met with, longed to mention him for whom alone she existed : Metusko observed her : his eyes, fixed on her lovely countenance, could behold no other object : Polinska blushed, cast her's on the ground, and the beloved name expired on her lips.

The fierce Polander had passed his life wholly in camps, and, till then, had considered love as a weakness unworthy of a great mind. At the age of forty, he retained the strength and agility of his youth, and never had he smiled at the sight of beauty. At the sight of Polinska he experienced not that agitation which precedes true and delicate love, but a sensation which convinced him glory alone would not satisfy him : extreme in everything, he could only love as he made war.

Polinski had offered him his castle, where he entertained and lodged him, together with his principal officers. His daughter, intimidated by that ferocious air which always alarms virgin modesty, had retired to the society of her women. Her presence alone was wanting at a sumptuous feast, at which all the praises, honours, marks of respect and deference were lavished on Metusko. Solely occupied

with a recent passion but already in its full force, because it was the first tribute of a heart unused to control and that knew not how to dissemble, Metusko noticed nothing but the absence of Polinska: he studiously avoided the homage by which he was overwhelmed, and taking the earliest opportunity of returning, he sought her apartment.

He was a stranger to that embarrassment—that overstrained delicacy which sometimes forces a smile from innocence itself: he declared his passion with a degree of clearness, precision and energy, that renders a positive answer inevitable. He offered his hand with the unpolished frankness of a soldier who knows how to love, but not how to tell his love: he seized and kissed that of Polinska with the confidence of a man whom nothing ought to resist; and who thinks he honours the woman, whoever she may be, that he deigns to raise to his own rank.

Polinska, shocked at so abrupt a proposal, felt the danger of a decided negative: she preserved strict silence; and her eyes, as well as the paleness of her countenance, would have said enough to any man who should have had the experience of which Metusko was deficient. He attributed to modesty alone, a sort of irresolution and alarm which secretly flattered his pride: it was not in his disposition to doubt for a moment that the young lady would willingly accept the hand of the liberator of Poland; he, therefore, returned to the public-hall, and thus addressed himself to Polinski:—

“A warrior counts the moments, and mine are peculiarly precious. The laurel which to-day adorns my forehead, may to-morrow overshadow my tomb. Your daughter is sensible to the ardour with which she has inspired me: my name, my rank, my fortune, I lay all at her feet: let the minister of the altar instantly consecrate our mutual wishes. At the first rays of to-morrow’s sun, I will quit the arms of my bride, march against Rodolpho, and new victories shall illustrate your son-in-law, and redound to the glory of your house.”

One may be well acquainted with the manners of the world, and yet be greatly embarrassed. It is easy to conceive the state of mind of this venerable parent, who had all his life been accustomed to practise the open frankness of former ages: he paused a few minutes, and thought that

the only means of extinguishing a passion, so precipitately announced, was at once to take away even the hope of success.

For the first time, Polinski condescended to speak a language foreign to his heart. He lamented that anterior engagements must deprive him of this opportunity of allying himself to the greatest man by which Poland was honoured : but he spoke emphatically of the inviolability of a noble Polander's word : he insisted on the obligation imposed by nature on a father, to insure, as far as in his power, the happiness of his children : he, at last, declared, with moderation, with marks of deference, thanks for the offer he declined, that he regretted a mutual attachment, consecrated by his consent, united Sobieski to Polinska.

Metusko was silent in his turn ; but it was not difficult to judge by the alteration in his features what was passing in his soul. Enraged at a refusal which he had not in the least expected, and which he thought humbled him in the eyes of his officers who were present, his bosom swelled with indignation, his look was menacing, his hand pressed the hilt of his scimitar, and he seemed to defy Polinski : he, however, recollected himself before the storm burst : an easy victory would have been beneath him :—he retired with his friends.

Polinski was ignorant that his daughter had refused the proposals of Metusko : he went to her apartment and found her in a situation difficult to be described. All that can afflict or alarm the bosom of love tormented the mistress of Sobieski : she would have inspired Metusko himself with pity, if a stronger sentiment had not taken possession of his heart.

She heard her father without arousing from the distress in which she was plunged : she gently reproached him for having named her lover, and thus indiscreetly exposing him to the hatred and vengeance of his General.

"It would have been better," said she, "to have humoured his pride, made use of plausible pretences, gained time, and suffered him to quit us in doubt as to the success of his proposal ; when he would, doubtless, in the midst of his warlike enterprizes, have presently forgotten a person whom he would have seen but for a moment."

Polinski, assailed at once by his apprehensions of Metusko, the dangers that menaced Sobieski, and the sorrow which

overwhelmed his daughter, knew not what resolution to adopt. He consoled, he endeavoured to encourage the unhappy Polinska : he described Metusko as too magnanimous to permit an affair of such a nature to influence his conduct to Sobieski, and make him sacrifice to a blind passion the important duties entrusted to his care. His daughter appeared to give way to these reasons : he fancied he had restored her to tranquillity, and embracing her, went to his chamber, where he long invoked sleep to close his eyelids.

Metusko alone with his officers, conversed respecting the affront he thought he had received. He could not conceive that a boy who had scarcely drawn his sword, could be preferred to him. Nevertheless, this boy, who to the advantages of birth and fortune added a fine person and an extraordinary amiableness of manners, was not a rival to be disdained : and the mere idea of having the possession of a heart to dispute with him, irritated his self-love, already much hurt, and augmented the violence of his desires.

Pretending to vanquish a woman as he overcame an enemy, he conceived a thousand different projects : he thought of punishing Sobieski for the crime of pleasing, by delivering him to the Imperialists : the next moment he resolved to drag Polinska to the altar, and force her to receive his hand : he expected that her father and the minister should shew themselves equally insensible as he was to the resistance and the tears of beauty : he expected—in short, what did he not expect ?

An officer, one of that class of men who have no other merit than that of braving death, Ragotzi, capable of sacrificing everything to the desire of gratifying his chief, Ragotzi, more ferocious, perhaps, than himself, pointed out a mode of proceeding which removed all difficulties, and which would place Polinska under the hard necessity of accepting the hand of Metusko, or of blushing before any one.

Of what signification was the gift of her heart, the most indispensable quality in the eyes of a delicate lover ! It was her person that the Palatine desired, which was already in his power if he chose to exert it ; and persons in his confidence might be appointed, during his absence, to observe and inform him of the conduct of his wife.

This atrocious counsel was but too well calculated to flatter the impatient phrenzy of a man, accustomed to see

everything give way before him : he did not set himself to consider the consequences of this horrible action. The remembrance of Polinska's charms, the idea still more seducing that he formed of the charms which modesty concealed, the facility of putting the plan suggested into execution, blinded his reason and disordered his imagination. He stripped himself of the different parts of that armour which he honoured in the field of glory, and the incubance of which would prevent his degradation : he traversed, with the rapidity of lightning, the long corridor that led to the asylum of innocence : he could only be compared to a destructive torrent which is about to overturn every impediment.

He entered the chamber where Polinska's women had retired for the night : his inflamed countenance, his haggard eye, his menacing air, the hour, the place, all conspired to create the most dreadful apprehensions : they hoped to defend the entrance of the sanctuary, reserved one day for the favoured and meritorious Sobieski ; but the muscular arms of Metusko seized, and easily forced them out of the apartment, shut the door upon them, and Polinska was left defenceless.

The unhappy victim was thinking of her lover. She was speaking to him as if he were within hearing :—she swore inviolable fidelity to him as if Metusko would respect her oaths.—He appeared. Remonstrances, prayers, threats, the tears and sobs of beauty, nothing could restore him to reason : the disorder into which he had thrown her, carried his delirium to its height ; he forgot his fame, his presumption knew no bounds—Polinska, the innocent Polinska, was for ever dishonoured !

Her women had immediately run to her father's apartment, and the old man advanced to that of his daughter as fast as his age would permit him : he was followed by his most faithful domestics, and he carried in his feeble hand that sword once so formidable to the Turks and Hungarians. He entered—the sight he beheld informed him enough ; the weapon was raised,—he was about to strike—

"I am without arms," said Metusko, coldly ; "nor would I make use of mine against you. Strike, if you wish that your daughter's infamy should be eternal : hear me, if you would restore her honour. My intention was not wantonly to commit a crime : if I have employed force, it was because my suit was refused, because I had not time to use persua-

sion, and because by the means I have had recourse to, I hoped to obtain possession of a woman without whom I cannot exist. Her attendants, as well as my officers, know she is mine. It is for you to decide : send directly for your chaplain, name me your son-in-law, I am happy, and all is repaired."

This resolution was in fact the only one a father thus circumstanced could adopt : it was, perhaps, also that most suitable to Polinska. But, how bring herself to look in the face without horror, the man who had just raised an eternal barrier between her and Sobieski !—how yield herself to his odious caresses !—how share in those transports which would every instant remind her of the happiness which had so long and so fondly entirely occupied her imagination ? In a word, how could she determine to join her fate for ever to that of a monster, for no other reason than because he had committed a crime of which she was the victim ?

"No, no," cried she from her bed of affliction, "he whose love is brutality, who has rendered me unworthy of the man who was everything to me, and for whom alone I thought life desirable, shall never call me his. I will lament my shame and the loss I have experienced ; but that barbarian shall not obtain a reward for his cowardly outrage. Let him return to his camp, let him shed rivers of blood, let him bathe in gore, let him glut himself with it : they are his pleasures, he ought to taste no others."

Polinski was the soul of honour, consequently of those cold calculations of convenience or interest, by which the greater part of mankind are swayed. He could consider Metusko in no other light than as an infamous tyrant who had violated the rights of hospitality, disparaged a female who ought to have excited his respect, and broken off a marriage on which the consolation of his declining life depended.

In despair that the impotence of his arm would not allow him to avenge this insult, he called on, he invoked Sobieski, he took rapid strides about the room, he stopped before his daughter, he sorrowfully contemplated her, he wiped away her tears ; and, at length, addressing himself to Metusko :—"Away," said he : "fly from a spot that you have dared to profane : deliver us for ever from your odious presence."

All idea is not entirely extinguished, except in bosoms naturally vicious. Metusko, a slave to ungovernable passions, incapable of the slightest restraint, was, nevertheless, far

from being a villain : his first effervescence was scarcely calmed, before reason, in some measure, resumed her empire ; and the words of Polinska and her father made him feel the acute pangs of remorse.

This man, so haughty, embraced the knees of Polinski, condescended in his turn to make use of prayers, and received no other answer to these last efforts than fresh reproaches, so much the more bitter as he felt he had merited them. He arose, seeing his importunities were in vain, left the apartment without daring to cast his eyes on the hapless victim of his baseness, assembled his chief officers, and ordered the signal to be sounded for mounting.

"The action to which you advised me," said he to Ragotzi, stepping in his stirrup, "could spring only from a tiger or from a coward. Choose which of the two epithets you prefer : my arm will chastise the former, or chase the latter from an army in which he is unworthy to serve."

"If he who advises be a tiger, what shall we say of him who executes ?"

"That he has repented of his ill conduct, and that he has still virtue enough left to punish the cowardly atrocious wretch, who had not an inordinate passion to plead as his excuse."

Ragotzi was brave ; but bodily strength in those times decided everything, and no one was able to resist Metusko. The two warriors were not more than a hundred toises from their respective squadrons, when they faced about and furiously charged each other. Ragotzi, pierced in the breast by his adversary's lance that perforated his breast-plate, lost his seat and rolled in the dust.

Metusko leaped from his horse, assisted him to rise, and drawing his sword : "Your life is forfeited," said he, "according to the laws of chivalry ; but I am unwilling to add to the crime which you have been the cause of my committing the infamy of killing a defenceless antagonist. Let the sword decide between us." He attacked, he parried, he advanced, he warded off the blows that menaced him, he sprang forward, he retired, he united agility to address, the fire darted from the collision of the armour with the brandished steel : at length, the helmet of Ragotzi was shivered in pieces, a feint deceived him, and his opponent was too skilful to neglect this advantage. "If the crime is not atoned for," said Metusko, remounting his horse, "it is at least avenged in the blood of the instigator : it only

remains for me to inflict the same justice on myself, and I swear to seek death at the first encounter with the enemy." He faithfully adhered to his oath, and he everywhere met with victory.

It may, perhaps, excite astonishment that Polinski, whose courage was become useless, should not have recourse to the laws against a criminal who had incurred the punishment of death. But to make the tribunals resound with his complaints, was to divulge his daughter's shame, and this unfortunate secret was known only to the officers of Metusko, who had immediately marched to a considerable distance, and the attendants whose fidelity and secrecy might be relied on. Besides, what could the laws avail against a warrior to whom everything submitted, and who was incessantly surrounded and protected by the love and blind admiration of his troops?

The unfortunate Polinska remained abandoned to the horror of her destiny. Alone with her father, who himself had but too much need of consolation, she shed tears at the recollection of those dreams of happiness, which were to be followed by days of serenity and delight. It is when a woman has lost for ever an adored lover, that she studies, details his qualities, his accomplishments, his virtues; and the imagination wandering at pleasure, frequently adorns him with those graces which he never possessed.

Polinska's mind was continually occupied by the image of Sobieski, and a slightest recollection or a word from her father, plunged her in the most violent agonies. These dreadful reflections were only suspended by an idea still more distressing: by day, by night, even in the middle of a sleep, a hundred times interrupted, Metusko presented himself to her, just as he appeared at that terrible moment which she strove, but which it was impossible for her to forget.

A prey to the most frightful effects of dreams, she endeavoured to fly, to cry out for assistance: her feet and her voice refused her appeal: her arms were often agitated or extended, as if striving to seize or keep off the monster: it was the post of her bed that she had struck with her delicate hands. The contusion she received in those encounters awakened her, when she was found half dead with terror and fatigue, her long hair flowing on marble, and her limbs bedewed with an icy humidity.

Her unhappy father's affliction was the greater as he did

all in his power to stifle his chagrin. In the presence of his daughter, tranquillity was in his countenance and death in his heart. Frequently in the middle of those conversations in which each strove to conceal from the other ideas that would forcibly intrude, Polinska suddenly left the room to give vent to her sobs, and on returning, found that her father had also absented himself. She would then send for him, go herself to seek him, and discover him in a retired part of the castle, in the gardens or on the terrace. At her approach, he wiped the tear from his aged eye, and received her with a forced smile.

The letters of Sobieski added, if possible, to the horror of their situation. Always tender, always faithful, he poured forth his most ardent wishes for the peace which alone would permit him to return to his lover: he indulged the hope of obliging the enemy to acknowledge the independence of Poland, and doubted not that so great a man as Metusko would be able to humble the Imperial haughtiness. He should then fly on the wings of love to Blonie: he should see again the enchanting spot in which beauty listened to the declaration of his passion, and deigned to make a kind return.

He should fondly behold—he should mark with his Polinska, the tree under which he had found her seated: they would cultivate together those lilies that she stripped of their leaves while thinking of him. It was in that delightful walk where the first pledge of their union should make the earliest essay of his infant steps, and pass from the arms of his fond mother into those of his happy father.

And it was in that very walk, at the very spot that Sobieski so passionately reminded her of, that Polinska read over and over these heart-rending letters:—it was there that her tears and her kisses effaced the characters which, though obliterated from the paper, were eternally engraven on her heart. She would then let her head fall on her bosom: a profound stupor succeeded the crisis of her agitation, till, suddenly returning to the full sense of her misery, she exclaimed in a mournful tone of voice:—

“I am sullied by crime: you will never behold again this once-happy place: never more see her who looked upon her fate as inseparably united to yours: never embrace the son whose presence you so fondly anticipate.”

This wretchedness of these two innocent victims of passion and power lasted several months: it had ruined the

already-shattered constitution of the old man, and inflamed the blood of his hapless daughter : both were at the same time seized by a malady which rapidly conducted them to the brink of the grave. The father there found an asylum against sorrow : the youth of Polinska, the assiduous attention of Clotilda and her women, to whom she was most attached, at length restored her to life.

Upon resuming the possession of her senses, she named, she called for her father ; she learned that she was abandoned to her own courage. Alas ! it was wholly gone. Her eyes again closed, she earnestly invoked death, she, perhaps, would have inflicted the blow herself : certain unequivocal movements informed her that her life was no longer her own to dispose of, and that she was bound to live for the sake of a being who was not guilty of its father's crime.

The first letters which had been written to Sobieski in reply to his, bore the impression of the most ardent sensibility, and were adorned with the charms of hope. Those which it had been necessary to write after the fatal event had taken place, were, evidently, constrained, obscure, and sometimes cold. Polinska feared to express a sentiment which the cruelty of fate had condemned her to overcome ; above all, she feared to flatter the unfortunate youth with the prospect of a happiness to which neither one nor the other could longer aspire : she, nevertheless, continued to write. Indeed, how could she refuse herself this mournful consolation !—how could she, of a sudden, break off all communication with him she had loved, whom she still loved, and whom she should never cease to love ?

Of all the passions which compose the felicity or torment of man, there is no one so easily alarmed as that of love. Sobieski no longer found that animated and enchanting style, which aided him to support a long separation from the object of his affections. Could absence have changed her ? Could she go so far as to forget engagements which death alone ought to dissolve ? Had a more fortunate rival succeeded in pleasing her ? Perhaps they were both jesting at his credulity : perhaps, the sword of the enemy had spared him only to deliver him to all the evils which can embitter existence.

By degrees he became a prey to mistrust, suspicion and jealousy ; which last, is not less poignant for having no determined object to fix upon : he was unable to bear the

anxiety which consumed him : but, what were his feelings when the malady of Polinska rendered her incapable of writing ! He counted the days, the weeks : twenty couriers were despatched to Blonie ; they all returned without any answer, without even having been able to approach Polinska.

Sobieski, in despair, was ready secretly to abandon his army, and appear in person to dispute for the idol of his soul, with the audacious mortal who pretended to rival him in her affections : in consequence, he gave his orders to the faithful Wilfrid, who immediately saw the impropriety of the proposed step, but who was weak enough to prefer his master's repose to his glory : the horses were prepared at a little distance : Sobieski stole out of his camp at midnight.

Scarcely had he ventured a few paces beyond it when he suddenly stopped, terrified at the idea of his ignoble conduct. What opinion must he expect from all Poland, whose eyes were fixed on him at that critical moment !—What would be the opinion of posterity that judges dispassionately !—that he sacrificed his honour to love, and his country to an inconstant woman : that, for her sake, he delivered up the flower of the Polish nobility to the sword of the Imperialists.

He saw his memory dishonoured, and his name ranged among those of traitors : he shuddered, he put his hands before his face, as if the sun had already revealed his shame, as if thirty thousand spectators were publicly proclaiming it around him. "No," cried he, "no, never. Let us leave perfidy to a sex naturally crafty, break these inglorious chains, and think only of the salvation of Poland."

He returned to his tent, and passed the rest of that cruel night alternately combating love and duty. He loved too much to be able in so short a time to forget Polinska, though thoroughly convinced of her duplicity : he was desirous, however, of obtaining full assurance of his misfortune : he wished to be acquainted with every particular : he hoped that the multiplicity of the injuries done him might arm his pride against his heart.

"Away," said he to Wilfrid, "secretly enter Blonie, use your utmost endeavours to get informed of her actions, her words, and even her thoughts, if that be possible : above

all, learn the name of him whom the treacherous creature has thought fit to prefer to me."

Wilfrid, as zealous as he was submissive, instantly mounted his horse, and promised his master that he would exactly follow his instructions.

This faithful squire had grown old in the service of the family : he had an excellent heart, but was so little used to practice deception that he was never more easily seen through than when he attempted to dissimulate. Every one to whom he addressed himself at Blonie, immediately perceived that the alarm of Sobieski was the cause of his journey ; but, the fatal event had not escaped beyond the castle walls ; and the Polish officers who could have mentioned it, were already opposed to the Imperialists.

The only information Wilfrid could obtain was, that Polinska was just recovering from a dangerous illness : that since the departure of her lover she had lived extremely retired, and saw the ladies of the city no oftener than politeness absolutely forced her. He, however, was moreover apprized by the physician who had attended her, that during all her delirium she had been wholly occupied by the idea of his master, and was incessantly pronouncing his name.

Wilfrid was satisfied with these encouraging particulars : but, how were they to be reconciled with the icy expressions of her letters, which had at first awakened the mistrust of Sobieski, and with the silence she had maintained ? A wiser man than Wilfrid might have been as much embarrassed as he was at these seeming contradictions.

He at length judged that the young lady was swayed by motives that she alone could explain. His master had not forbidden him to see her ; and, since it appeared certain that he was still beloved, what possible inconvenience could result from his squire requesting a conversation which would justify her, dispel the suspicions of his master, and restore harmony between two hearts evidently formed for each other ?

He arrived at the castle : no one at the gate :—he entered, he passed through several rooms in the same manner as he had been accustomed to do at a time when modest beauty gave him the meeting, smiled on receiving his messages, and blushed on delivering hers in return. He, at last, encountered Clotilda ; but, instead of the favourable

reception with which he had formerly always been honoured and which he now expected, she hastily turned her back at the sight of him, shut the door after her, and left him more amazed, more puzzled than ever.

One of the companions of Clotilda soon after entered the hall, in which he continued immoveably fixed, by another door; and accosting him with only two words, *wait here*, directly withdrew. Wilfrid, aroused from his stupor, sat down, and vainly strove to clear up this mysterious conduct. A whole hour elapsed, during which he saw no one: a second in the same manner: Polinska, Clotilda, nobody appeared. The squire knew not what to conclude, nor how he should act on the occasion.

At length, tired of staying so long in vain, he was about to depart from the castle, when Clotilda returned, delivering him a letter, retired, and again shut the doors after her without deigning to answer a single one of the questions which succeeded each other with the utmost rapidity, from the mouth of the curious Wilfrid. However, putting up the letter, he remounted his horse without delay, and took the road to the camp, pretty well assured that neither the young lady nor her attendants had the proper use of their senses.

Polinska had been informed of the arrival of the squire at Blonie, and his unexpected presence added to her affliction and embarrassment: how difficult was it to deprive herself of the satisfaction of seeing him, and hearing him relate the least circumstances which concerned a man she adored! But at the same time, how could she appear before him in the state in which violence had placed her?

Since she had acquired the melancholy certainty, she had given up all her acquaintance: Clotilda and her companion were the only persons whom she would admit to witness her blushes. Nevertheless, her situation was not so apparent but that it might, in all probability, escape the notice of an old man, not the most discerning in the world. If, however, he should observe anything, or if her confusion should reveal the odious truth, would not Sobieski immediately believe that she had been the willing accomplice of the atrocious Metusko?

Even admitting that he did justice to her innocent conduct, what could a woman, irreparably dishonoured, expect from him but compassion? And ought she not to persist in her design of renouncing him, although a blind passion should induce him to brave the voice of public opinion?

"His pity," cried she, sobbing, "his pity is all that I can implore, that is the utmost he can grant to the wretched Polinska.—But, not to see his servant, to leave him a prey to the anxiety by which he is, doubtless, tormented! No, the dreadful truth shall be told him: my pen shall perform the hateful office: I will liberate him from his engagements: the sacrifice is horrible, but it is indispensable. I will renounce the happiness of my life, which I am still doomed to support for the sake of—Ah!"

She wrote, and love for the last time dictated to her. The beginning of her letter was impassioned, ardent: her heart was a volcano from which issued, by torrents, flames which had been long concentrating. These preliminary phrases, however, said nothing:—the horrid recital still remained to begin.—The pen fell from her hand: she had not the power to trace the scene of infamy, and tore her letter in pieces.

"Let him believe me capricious, faithless, and perjured," cried she: "but let him for ever be ignorant that his mistress is dishonoured. Time will close the wound his heart will, doubtless, receive: he will learn to pronounce my name with indifference: perhaps, another object—. And I shall all the while be secretly faithful to him. Retired from the world with my innocent child, the first word it will be taught to pronounce will be the name of Sobieski. Cruel infant! how much have you already cost your hapless mother!"

She began to write afresh: this letter, as well as several others, shared the fate of the former: the following was, at last, delivered into the hands of Wilfrid:—

"Our affections depend not on ourselves. I once loved you greatly, time and absence have changed my sentiments: I renounce you for ever, and your efforts to make me alter this resolution would be in vain. Whatever opinion you may entertain of my inconstancy, depend on my last and inviolable promise, that no other man shall ever succeed you in my heart, or receive the hand which cannot be yours."

This billet would, doubtless, plunge Sobieski into despair: but, it was better that he should lose all hope at once: it was necessary that he should feel extremely offended, in order to summon up courage sufficient to combat his love: and Polinska's affection for him was such, that she, for his sake, sincerely desired he might wholly forget her.

Upon reading this unequivocal epistle, the young Palatine was indeed furious ; but what his mistress had foreseen, actually happened. Vexation, self-love, all the little passions that he possessed in common with other men, were for once useful to him, and commanded efforts over his heart which brought it at length to a situation more supportable than it had been for some time. The toils and operations of war diverted his imagination from an object, which, in spite of himself, was still dear to him, but which no longer occupied his mind except at intervals.

Meantime, Polinska sustained alone the weight of their joint unhappiness ; and her reason that she was incessantly invoking was often insufficient. She seemed to have become more attached to Sobieski, by the sacrifice that she had found courage to make, with a view to his repose. Sometimes she felt a wish for his return, that he might force her secret from her, be convinced of her innocence, and impose silence to her delicacy.

She would fondly give way to these illusions, which are never without charms for a woman that loves, and which suspend awhile her sorrows ; but, if her eyes happened in these moments to glance on herself, if certain internal motions should remind her of her situation, she immediately awoke, the dream completely vanished, she experienced her misery in its fullest extent, and anticipated a long and wretched futurity.

In this manner she dragged on her existence until the time of her becoming a mother : this moment, so sweet for a beloved wife who is surrounded by a prudent and attentive mother, a husband anxiously waiting for the first cry of the desired infant, a young friend, who is herself a mother, and who encourages her to support those pains which will be succeeded by so many new enjoyments,—this moment was as hard for the unfortunate Polinska, as the days which had preceded it.

Alone with Clotilda and her companion, who were both ignorant of that beneficent art which aids nature, though it can do no more, without any other assistance than their useless moans, without the hope that any consolation would succeed the cruel pains she suffered, she gave birth to a son who had caused all her unhappiness, and whom, nevertheless, she bedewed with her maternal tears.

The faithful Clotilda had, under different pretences, taken care to remove out of hearing the attendants belonging to

the castle. She disguised herself as well as she could, tenderly wrapped up the infant, and leaving Blonie by the least frequented streets, entered the country without knowing to whose hands she should confide the little object of so much secrecy.

The fear of being recognized by some of the peasants who resided in the environs of the city, determined her to walk to a considerable distance. She, at length, arrived at the borders of a wood: she heard the strokes of the hatchet, the dull sound of which was blended with the rustic song of the wood-cutter. She timidly approached: a hale, active man, whose ruddy complexion and open countenance bespoke an easy mind, was attacking an oak apparently coeval with the world. His wife was smiling at his efforts: she was seated just by: a child of love, blooming as health, was hanging at a breast white as alabaster: his little sister, who was scarcely able to stand alone, was playing with her mother's hair, and from time to time quitted her amusement to put some chips under the earthen vessel, in which was preparing the repast of the happy family: this delightful scene emboldened Clotilda.

Young and pretty as the cottager's wife, they were mutually struck with each other: a similarity of tastes and dispositions quickly established a sort of intimacy between them. The wood-cutter laid down his instrument and gaily came to join in the conversation.

Clotilda explained herself: they were disposed to do their utmost to serve her: a handsome present of gold placed them entirely at her devotion: the new-born infant partook with the innocent child of this cheerful couple, of the milk and attention of this rustic matron; who congratulated herself on the prospect of being able to procure a little repose for the father of her children. It was in this wood that Polinska, disguised to escape detection, was thenceforth to repair with a thousand precautions, at once to lament and console herself for being a mother.

Four years elapsed, and the disasters of war had alternately been felt by the Polanders and Imperialists. The great talents of Metusko, aided by those which had been insensibly acquired by Sobieski, at length fixed the instability of fortune. Rodolpho, forced to abandon his pretensions, released Poland from the tribute she had formerly paid, and consented to her independence. The Polanders gave loose to their raptures, and in the midst of their re-

joicings, forgot their sacrifices, their misery, and the blood they had shed.

Sobieski, overwhelmed with honours and at liberty to repose after so long and laborious a warfare, discovered again in inaction, the seeds of those sentiments which he had fancied extinguished, but which were only smothered at the bottom of his heart.

The image of Polinska incessantly appeared to his imagination, such as she had been when, with the ingenuousness of native sensibility, she answered to the ardent expressions of his love. She loved him no longer : this she had herself declared : nevertheless, faithful to her promise, she shunned the society of the other sex, and fame only spoke of her to render homage to the modest virtues which she cultivated in her retirement.

Perhaps, the presence of the lover once so dear to her, would revive her former partiality : perhaps, her capricious resolution would give way to prayers, to supplications, to the necessity of loving so natural at the age of twenty. It is enough to hope, to induce us to hazard something ; and what risk do we run by the experiment when already every thing is lost ?

Sobieski set out from the palatinate of Posuania : he traversed the mountains of Lutomirsk almost alone, and disengaged from that pomp which always fatigues, and so seldom satisfies the person on whose account it exists.

Accompanied by Wilfrid and followed by two servants, he pressed on his steed, and beguiled the length of the road by indulging the delicious chimeras which had so long and so agreeably deceived him. Wholly occupied by Polinska, he did not perceive that the animal he bestrode decreased in strength and agility every step he took. Impatient to arrive, he continued to urge him forward by the mechanical application of the spur ; he, at length, entered the wood in which the son of Metusko was growing up in obscurity.

He was not more than two leagues from Blonie : the sun was on its decline ; but, before the approaching darkness should prevent him from distinguishing his road, he would lie at the feet of her who had by this time resumed her former empire over his soul.

His horse, worn out with fatigue, suddenly sunk under him, and all his efforts to raise him up were in vain : he looked behind him : his servants, less advantageously mounted than himself, had not been able to keep pace

with him : he called to them : echo only answered to his voice.

In those times, those excellent roads kept up at the public expense, as well as those useful establishments in which the traveller, in exchange for his money, receives the benefits of hospitality, were absolutely unknown. Sobieski was convinced that Wilfrid and his servants would make the best of their way to Blonie, by the first track that should present itself to them. Chance alone could direct them to choose that which he had taken : besides, it would be losing time to wait for them ; and their horses less vigorous than his own, could be of no utility to him.

It was not, however, to be expected, that he could get clear of the wood on foot before night should surprise him : he would be running the risk of losing his way and wandering from the proper direction, which would retard the moment that was to decide his fate. Could he but find a guide ? This last idea made him determine to seek one, and putting this resolution into practice, he mounted an eminence from whence he could see to a considerable distance.

The smoke which arose above the trees, announced a habitation not far off : he, accordingly, proceeded towards the quarter where he had observed it, cutting away with his sabre the brambles and flexible shrubs that impeded his progress.

He came to a modest cottage, which he entered without ceremony. Nothing could exceed the neatness of this lowly abode : a young woman was giving their supper to three children, previously to consigning them to their bed of clean straw for the night. She was terrified at the aspect of a warrior, whose shining armour reminded her of the glory and miseries of Poland.

Sobieski lifted up the visor of his helmet, and the mildness of his countenance soon tranquillized the timid villager : he stripped his head entirely : his flaxen hair flowing in curls on his shoulders, without hiding the arched brow that overhung a blue eye which beamed gentleness and virtue ; and the young woman perfectly recovered from her fears, asked him with a smile, how she could be of any service to him ?—"By finding me some one who would be willing to conduct me to Blonie," replied the young traveller, in a voice by no means calculated to revive her alarm.

The husband of the woman was gone to meet two ladies, who would not be long before they arrived, and whom he

would attend back at midnight. The gentleman, if he pleased, might accompany them, and the ladies would not be at all sorry, for they were very fearful.

Whatever chagrin may afflict a young gentleman, he is not insensible to the simple graces of any woman whatever, and cannot sit at table with her without now and then addressing her with a word. It is natural also, to wish to know something of the courteous stranger, in whose fate we take an interest simply on account of the service we have rendered him. The conversation insensibly became regular : the questions rapidly succeeded ; Sobieski answered them frankly.

The name of the young hero had reached the heart of the forest. The good woman, struck with admiration and respect, took the children in her hands, brought them to his feet, and then fell on her knees before him. Sobieski, much affected at this unsuspecting homage, raised them up, assured her of his gratitude for her kindness, and took in his arms the finest of the boys.

He questioned him, and received replies which he could not have expected from his age : he caressed him, and the child, encouraged by this treatment, displayed his natural genius in several sallies that escaped him : the bread, the milk, the fruit, all became common between them ; and the little favourite, enchanted by the pleasing manners of the stranger, repaid him his caresses with usury.

Sobieski had his back turned to the door. At the moment he was receiving a hundred kisses from the child, the master of the cottage returned, accompanied by two women enveloped in large hoods. On entering, they perceived a stranger, but, as it was unlikely he should know them, his presence did not inspire any mistrust. One of them advanced towards the infant with extended arms, eagerly calling out : " My son ! my dear son !" When, looking the Palatine in the face, she exclaimed : " Heavens ! 'tis he ! 'tis he !—O my God !—Signor, I am innocent !" and she fell senseless on the floor.

Sobieski had recollected that voice which so long charmed his ear. Led by an involuntary movement, he raised up the unfortunate object of his journey ; but, immediately calling to mind the words which had struck him like thunder : "*My son ! my son !—I am innocent !*" his jealousy burst forth, his honour aroused him : he determined to

quit every place where the perfidious and dissimulating woman should present herself to his sight : he resolved to retire with all expedition to his estates, and wait in absolute solitude for the term of his sorrowful career.

Already he had broken from the arms of Polinska, who, though she was unable to speak, had recovered her senses, and who, discovering by his countenance the passions by which he was agitated, was desirous of retaining him to make him listen to her justification. Already he had passed the threshold of the cottage : troubled, beside himself, he walked on at hazard ; it was enough that he was leaving her.

Clotilda, who attended her mistress, could not suffer him to go away with so unfavourable and so unjust a persuasion respecting her conduct. She followed him : she called to him : she urged him to stop and hear reason.

“ A word, Signor,—one word——.”

“ I have heard too much already.”

“ Appearances deceive you.”

“ She is a mother, she has confessed it.”

“ She is, nevertheless, innocent.”

“ Impossible,—impossible !”

“ I swear it, and I will convince you of it.”

Clotilda related to him the arrival of Metusko, his love, and his propositions, the refusal of Polinska, the horrible excess to which he was carried, the tears, the lamentations, the constancy of her mistress, the sacrifice that she made of her happiness to a man who loved her enough to marry her, sullied as she was by a crime of which she was not the accomplice, but the shame of which he would partake with her.

Sobieski passed in an instant from the extreme of fury and despair, to the height of transport and tenderness : he ran, he flew back to the cottage, he embraced the knees of Polinska, he asked, he solicited, he pressed for his pardon : he had not merited it, since he had been able to doubt for a moment her virtue ; but, was it possible to love truly, without feeling jealousy from such appearances ? This excuse was the only one he could give : indeed, was that or any other necessary to a woman who still adored him ?

Polinska reclined upon his bosom : he discovered in her eyes that tenderness which her conduct had never belied : she abandoned to him her hand that he covered with kisses : a ray of joy beamed in every feature of the hapless fair

this was the first joyful moment she had experienced during four tedious years.

Plunged in an ecstasy of delight, she forgot her child, his detestable father, and her resolutions to shun for ever the man of her heart, the first, the only object of her affections. All that innocence can grant she lavished on her lover : all the delicious sensations which appertain to the human heart, intoxicated that of the fond Sobieski.

Celestial delirium ! that elevates us above our being, and which seems an emanation of the divinity, why are you not eternal like our immortal Author ? Has he intended that we should thus conceive the extent of his felicity, and remind us, by a sudden return to ourselves, that it is not made for us ? Insensibly the charm that enraptured Sobieski and Polinska was dispelled.

She sought, she embraced her son : tears streamed from her eyes, and the name of Metusko escaped her lips. This name made a terrible impression on Sobieski : no longer the gentle lover sighing at the feet of beauty the purest and tenderest expressions of his passionate heart : he became the soldier wounded in what he holds most dear, who pants for the combat, and burns to shed the blood of a fellow-creature.

A hundred leagues separated him from Metusko ; at least, so he had reason to believe : but, he would pass them on wings of vengeance, and that which he would take, should be as terrible as the crime that had provoked it.

Fate, then, had yet other sufferings in reserve for the unfortunate Polinska : she was doomed to tremble for the life of her lover, in addition to what she had already undergone. All that eloquence possesses of strength, or sentiment of persuasion, was employed to divert him from his sinister project : his resolution remained unaltered : he would listen to nothing.

She took up her son : she ventured to present him to the young Palatine. "He is innocent also, and you have not the right to deprive him of his father.—That father is culpable, and may become more so by shedding your blood. Ah ! where could I then fly for consolation ? Could I survive that, the most terrible of all misfortunes ! Ungrateful man ! you do not imagine I should. I have regained your esteem ; let that, with your friendship, aid me to support the burthen of life."

"Friendship, do you say !—Can you exact that a heart

of fire like mine, should be reduced to so cold a sentiment ! Would you persist to punish me, to punish yourself, for a crime of which we are both ignorant, and the cruel effects of which we have felt but too much already ! You are not less precious in my eyes, you are not less respectable in those of virtuous persons, because a villain has taken by force what nature reserves for love. And you wish that he should live, the monster that I detest, that I despise ! Well then, madam, he shall live, since you desire it : I feel myself capable of this effort. But, if for your sake I renounce my just vengeance, you will abjure your prejudices : be mine, I will adopt your son, and you may expect from my generosity that I will treat him with the tenderness of a father."

What could Polinska say to this proposal ! Could she expose, by a longer resistance, the life of Sobieski ! Did not his double offer prove the excess of his delicacy ! Ought it not to assure her respecting his future conduct, and did it not meet her fondest wishes ! She should be the wife of him she adored : she might acknowledge her son, who was deservedly dear to her, and to whom her husband would give his name : they could all three retire to the remote estates of Sobieski, where they should be able to conceal their present felicity, and lose the remembrance of their past misfortunes.

It was by these motives, which the reason of Polinska could not reject, that Sobieski, and her faithful Clotilda strove to overcome her. She listened, she sometimes approved, she, however, still hesitated, though she secretly burned with the desire of yielding : so forcible, in those times which have since been styled barbarous, the opinion entertained by a woman of the reserve and duties of her sex.

"You have opposed this child to my vengeance," said he to her ; "suffer me, in my turn, to oppose him to your irresolution :—do not refuse him a father !"

And the amiable young warrior, and the affectionate Clotilda, and the wood-cutter and his wife, and Wilfrid and the servants, who had by that time arrived, united their wishes, their prayers, and pressed her on their knees to consent to be happy. "May you be always so," replied she, with a modest blush, addressing her lover, "and never forget that I judged myself unworthy of you."

It was in this very cottage, in the midst of the raptures

of pure and heart-felt joy, that the preliminaries of a union so much desired were agreed upon. Polinska and Sobieski loved each other, said so, could say nothing else, and did not trouble themselves about what was passing around them: love always prefers privacy.

But Clotilda was naturally gay and ingenious, and regulated the procession and the entertainments to admiration, at least, in her own opinion. Wilfrid, a stickler also for ancient ceremony, spoke up for it, and settled the points of etiquette: the servants now and then slipped in a word: the wood-cutter and his wife contented themselves with congratulating each other upon their beautiful visitor turning out to be the lady of their district.

The hours of happiness so quickly pass! Aurora began to gild the tops of the trees, and our lovers were still in the same spot, in the same attitude: their expressions were as ardent as ever: their hearts experienced equal satisfaction: they had as much to say as when they first met: the effusion of their souls seemed inexhaustible.

The appearance of day however, brought with it certain reflections. Should Polinska return to Blonie in a disguise that the breath of malignity might interpret to her disadvantage? Clotilda had scarcely made this observation, before old Wilfrid was on horseback: he rode to the castle, assembled Polinska's women, whom he brought back with him to the cottage, accompanied by the huntsmen with spare horses, that, for four years past, had led a life of inglorious ease.

The young lady was arrayed in a brilliant dress of silk and gold, ornaments formerly the garb of sorrow, now, the symbols of her faded lustre, which Hymen was about to restore to its pristine brightness. The son of Metusko was clad in a dress suitable to his years: Sobieski required no addition to his elegant person. All were mounted on palfreys, with trappings embroidered with silver, sweeping the dust.

They entered Blonie in the midst of the acclamations of the people, eager to see again him who had so long been destined to form the happiness of their lady; and whose return the loquacious Wilfrid had not failed to announce.

They enquired who that pretty child was that Polinska regarded with so much complacency, when her eyes wandered for a moment from Sobieski. Wilfrid was discreet, at least, he himself fancied so: but, it has been before

observed, his secrets were easily discovered : a word or two which dropped, had circulated and flew from mouth to mouth with the usual celerity, and augmented in the usual manner. Some mystery was presently suspected : Clotilda, to clear her mistress from the blame that attaches to a step of which she was incapable, eagerly related the fact as it had been ; and such were the love and respect entertained for her, that she was, notwithstanding, judged the chastest of women, and Sobieski, the most delicate as well as the happiest of men. In short, nothing was wanting to render his worthy father a witness of the felicity that he had prepared for him : he had recently paid the melancholy tribute that we all owe to nature.

The nobility of the environs were invited : the lists disposed : the amphitheatres prepared. The knights arrived at Blonie, ornamented with the colours of their respective mistresses, superbly mounted, preceded by their banners, and followed by their 'squires : the streets were strewn with flowers : flags were hung at all the windows : the people crowded every avenue : Clotilda, Wilfrid and others, distributed on all sides, the pledges of the magnificence and affection of their master and mistress : numerous bands of music announced the general joy, and the ringing of the bells, that the most respectable of connexions was about to be formed, and solemnized under the auspices of religion.

Sobieski, radiant as the rising sun that dispels the mists of night, eagerly entered the apartment of his Polinska. Embellished with the charms of love and young desire, she awaited his coming. At the sight of him she arose and presented him her hand : a numerous procession preceded and followed them : the Pontiff and his deacons, clothed in their sacerdotal robes, stood ready to meet them at the porch of the temple.

They approached, preserving a religious silence : suddenly a cry was heard : "'Tis he !—'tis Metusko !" The procession halted : death was in the eyes of Polinska, fury in those of Sobieski : indignation in every heart. The agitation was general : each questioned his neighbour, several ran to learn particulars, and brought back the intelligence, that a body of horse was entering the city, conducting Metusko prisoner.

It was the officers who fought under the immediate command of a man, highly guilty with respect to his conduct towards Polinska, but who had eternal claims to the public

gratitude, that were leading him to the scaffold ; to punish him, as they said, for a crime for which beauty was far from desiring to be avenged.

An hour longer, she would have been the wife of Sobieski ; but this unlooked-for, this fatal event, reduced her to the dreadful alternative of condemning to death the father of her child, to preserve her lover ; or to give her hand to a man she detested : a sacrifice much more cruel than that she had imposed upon herself when she renounced Sobieski. The law, however, was positive, and insisted upon her pronouncing the doom of her violator.

This last blow of fate, this horrible situation disordered her senses : she was conducted back to the castle, dying, inanimate. Sobieski, carried to the highest degree of rage, insulted, defied, and even threatened Metusko. "If you were loaded with chains," coldly replied the warrior, "I should spare you."

This man, whose whole life had been a long chain of exploits, and whose character had received no other stain than the reproach he had justly incurred for his ferocious conduct at Blonie, had forgotten, in the midst of his labours for the repose and happiness of his country, the charms of Polinska : time, to which everything gives way, had insensibly weakened the remembrance of an action which had at first been succeeded by the most poignant remorse. Metusko had long lived but for glory, which, faithful to his standard, had with him held the place of the enjoyments of the heart.

Constantly opposed to Rodolpho, the greatest general of the age, almost always inferior in numbers, but enabled to multiply his force by the enthusiasm with which he animated his troops, Metusko had successively destroyed three armies which had presented themselves before him. His activity, his valour, his prudence forced the destiny of battles to declare in his favour : his magnanimity seduced the vanquished : his generosity fixed them in his ranks.

The empire, exhausted by a war the object of which was foreign to the people, at length refused the Emperor the new levies that he continued to solicit : Rodolpho was, therefore, obliged to treat with the man that he had at first considered as a rebel, but whose brilliant successes raised him above himself.

Peace being thus restored to Poland, she thought of choosing a king. Sobieski, who, to his military talents

joined an unusual mildness of disposition, would perhaps have obtained a majority of suffrages but for his extreme youth, or rather, but for that love which rendered him insensible to everything that was not Polinska.

We have seen him lay down his arms when no more enemies remained to combat, leave the Poles to give themselves laws and a master, and, satisfied with reigning over a heart that was the object of his utmost ambition, occupy his whole attention with the means of re-conquering it.

Metusko had no doubt that the crown would be the reward of his services ; and, knowing he had merited it, he made no scruple of announcing his pretensions to the high honour. He did not attempt to conceal his aim : his soldiers, idolizing their chief, waited only for the proper moment to second him ; he would, doubtless, have ascended the throne, if his own officers, jealous of his glory, had not apprehended the inflexibility of his disposition, as well as a marked inclination to absolute power which they discovered in him, and which would reduce them to be the vain ornaments of the court, where they would enjoy no other consideration than what such a prince might think fit to honour them with.

The most formidable competitor that Metusko had to contend with was Jagellon, Duke of Lithuania, still a Pagan as well as most of his subjects, but who had assisted Poland with his treasures and his troops, and who, during the whole of the war, had commanded with honour and advantage a body of the army, which, however, was subordinate to Metusko.

The duke was not without good qualities ; but he was open, easy, and prodigal,—dangerous faults for the people, and always useful to courtiers : the Palatines were, therefore, secretly for Jagellon ; but, how could they exclude Metusko from a rank, to which he was called by the wish of the army and the rest of the nation ?

The first step necessary to be taken for this purpose, was to detach the people from his side. But what means could be employed with success on minds so much prepossessed in his favour ? His crime towards Polinska was no stain in his character with soldiers, naturally disposed to excuse the excesses which they themselves are always liable to commit.

Metusko had imparted to his principal officers, a design that he had long had in contemplation, and which he meant

to put into execution as soon as he should be seated on the throne. This was, to keep up, even in the midst of peace, a considerable number of troops for the purpose of controlling the Turks and Hungarians, the natural enemies of Poland: to introduce among these soldiers a severe discipline, that would render property secure and respected, which, till then, had been ravaged at the discretion of the military body.

He intended to deprive the nobles of the power of life and death over their peasants, and to strip them of the impunity which they received from the privilege of not being arrested for a capital crime, until after having been judicially convicted of it: he was desirous also that the nation should turn its attention to commerce, which an absurd pride induced it to abandon to strangers: and the army, which depended wholly on him, was to support these innovations by overawing the discontented.

These views were those of a prince worthy of a more enlightened age; but it was necessary to conceal his intentions until circumstances would permit them to be carried into execution: envy and malignity construing them into acts of tyranny and oppression, turned them against the benevolent author.

It was industriously circulated among the poor nobility, who alone composed the squadrons, that if Metusko obtained the crown, he meant to raise the peasants to an equality with them in all respects. It was added, that he proposed to introduce the German discipline among the Polish troops, and above all, to subject them to that infamous corporal chastisement, always disgusting to a haughty people, who can ill submit to any other check than that of honour.

It was insinuated to the Palatines that this army, destined in appearance to serve as a barrier against their external enemies, would, in fact, be raised against them; and would become in the hands of the new king, an instrument by which he would be able to destroy at pleasure their privileges, consecrated by ages, and the most precious attributes of their magnificence and exalted birth.

It was made a subject of reproach against him, that he intended to transform into a vile race of merchants, the most warlike and honourable nation of Europe; in short, he was described as a rash and enterprising character, who would abuse his authority as far as in his power, and re-

duce his subjects to a state of slavery, unprecedented even under the masters nominated by the emperors.

These insinuations were partly supported by proofs wrested from Metusko himself, who was too noble-minded to be mistrustful. They produced greater effects than even the authors of them had flattered themselves with obtaining : they at once disgusted both the Palatines and the nobility : all withdrew from a man who dared to think of depriving them of the privileges of which they were jealous to excess, and the liberty which they had hardly begun to enjoy, and which had cost them so much blood. The different parties united in favour of Jagellon, and at the convocation of the diet, Metusko was the only one who did not know that he had no longer anything to expect but from posterity.

His exclusion, however, unjust as it might be, was productive of a real benefit. The Palatines unanimously resolved to limit the authority of the prince who should be chosen, and of those who should succeed him : they declared that the sceptre should not be hereditary : that the kings should not raise any fortress : that they should not dispose of the public treasure : that they should levy no troops without the consent of the diets ; and that they should consecrate that famous declaration, which was to be pronounced by the new sovereign upon his advancement : "I invite the nation to dethrone me, if I do not observe the laws that I am about to swear to see maintained."

These institutions, proposed by the intimate confidants of Metusko, apprized him when too late, of the designs of the diet ; but they were the means of preventing public liberty from receiving a wound, until the time when three destructive powers conspired to efface the name of Poland from the map of Europe.

After these fundamental bases had been duly considered, the Palatine who presided over the diet asked Jagellon whether he would embrace christianity, and unite to Poland his duchy of Lithuania. The Prince submitted without resistance to these conditions, and was immediately proclaimed King. It may be presumed from the tranquillity of this election, so different from those which succeeded it, that everything was prepared and even agreed upon beforehand.

Metusko, incensed at the preference obtained over him

by a foreigner, had not the prudence to conceal his resentment: he was particularly hurt to find that those whom he had overwhelmed with honours and kindness, to whom he had granted his most intimate confidence, and whose suffrages he looked upon as certain in his behalf, should basely betray his cause. Incapable of any medium, when he gave way to the irascibility of his disposition, he rushed out of the assembly, loudly menacing all those whom he thought himself entitled to complain of.

His bravery was generally known and respected: his prodigious strength and address were universally feared: his combat with Ragotzi was not forgotten: duelling was still highly in vogue, no Palatine would have dared to refuse a challenge, and yet to strive against Metusko, was to expose himself to almost certain death. Intrepidity in the major part of men is no more than the persuasion, or at least, the hope of victory: and the Palatines, after so long a storm, desired nothing more than to enjoy their liberty and repose. In order to preserve their honour and retain their enjoyments inviolate, it became necessary to take off Metusko.

There was no direct conspiracy formed against him: there are certain secret sentiments which, though perfectly understood to exist between individuals, are confined to their own breasts. No Palatine would have confessed without a blush, the motives which animated him against the hero of Poland; but he who should begin the attack, however indirectly, might rest assured of the concurrence of the rest.

The Palatine of Rava first expressed himself in a style of great moderation, on the proceedings of Metusko against some of the members of the most respectable assembly. Encouraged by the air of approbation that he remarked on the countenances of the persons present, he demanded whether it was not their duty to consider of the punishment merited by those who openly attacked the liberty of election.

He suggested to the king that Metusko, powerful from the extent of his domains, from the number and attachment of his vassals, and above all, from his insurmountable courage, would be able to dispute with him the possession of the crown by main force, overthrow him from the throne, or, at least, plunge his country in the horrors of civil war. These apprehensions, which were not without foundation,

were further exaggerated by the other Palatines, and the credulous monarch appeared forcibly struck by them.

No existing law, however, was applicable to the impropriety of conduct in question. In the preceding diets, the sabre had frequently cut short the discussions which had arisen, without bringing to account those who shed the blood of their fellow-countrymen.

Metusko was not one of those obscure characters that authority immolates with impunity : it was to be feared that Poland would oppose to heads of imaginary accusations, the services and great qualities of him whom it was wished to get rid of. In order, therefore, to place on their side an appearance of justice, the Palatines availed themselves of the ancient, the only crime of Metusko, long forgotten in a crowd of brilliant exploits, and exaggerated the circumstances attending it with all their malicious ingenuity. The king signed the order for his arrest, and the execution of it was confided to his most inveterate enemies.

It was well known that love united Polinska to Sobieski : she could, consequently, consider Metusko in no other light than as the most odious of men : and it was not at all probable that she would redeem his life by the gift of her hand. The success of the plan formed against him, therefore, appeared certain : one difficulty only remained, which was, to arrest the person of a warrior, who would die rather than submit his hands to the chains which were destined for them : and it was foreseen what he might be capable of, if urged to the last patch of desperation.

It was resolved to surprise him in his sleep ; and that none of his friends, if he still had any, might apprise him of the danger by which he was menaced, the assembly was protracted until the night was far advanced, and no person was permitted to quit it on any pretence.

Metusko was unable to take repose. Tormented by the violence of his passions, he kept pacing his apartment with rapid strides : his attendants expected the explosion would follow a silence more energetic than words, whatever they might be.

"No," at length he exclaimed, suddenly stopping, "no, ungrateful country, I will not betray thee : I will not deliver thee again to the yoke from which I have rescued thee ; but I will not, by my presence, add to the triumph of a sovereign, unworthy to reign over a man like me ! I will retire to my estates, live in obscurity, and offer up my fer-

vent wishes for the public prosperity. Let my horses and equipage be instantly prepared."

His attendants were about to obey him, when a servant entered the room, to say that several Palatines requested admittance. "Let them come in," replied Metusko, and his formidable sword was at several yards distance.

To the first that appeared succeeded others, and more to these. Metusko was surrounded by traitors, and yet suspected nothing of their designs. They darted upon him like ferocious animals of prey, overthrew him, loaded him with chains, and delivered him to his lieutenants; who, witnesses of the misfortune of Polinska, basely consented to depose against him who had always conducted them to victory.

They had expected to see him enraged, and to meet with efforts of despair that it might, perhaps, prove difficult to repress; but never did Metusko appear greater than in this disaster. He opposed coolness to outrages, and his magnanimity to the contempt with which they affected to treat him. He walked in the midst of his guards with that air of superiority which announced that he had been their chief, and that he still felt himself worthy of being so.

The feeble and irresolute people flocked in multitudes to see him pass, pitied him, but made no attempt in his favour. They seemed to wait for a word from Metusko, to form him a party in an instant.

Faithful to his last resolution, the warrior would have continued equally to disdain the ingratitude of the throng and the ferocity of his guards, if the latter, fearing an insurrection in his behalf, had not endeavoured to justify the rigour with which he was treated, by accusing him of crimes purely imaginary.

The honour of Metusko did not permit him to dissimulate his errors; and his austere frankness would not let him pass in silence the injustice of those who dared to insinuate against him what was not true. He replied to these slanderous accusations with that energy which characterised him; and having once outstepped the limits that he had set to his resentment, he gave way to it without reserve.

He reproached his conductors with the indignity of their behaviour; he reminded the spectators of his services: several among them had fought under him, and been eye-witnesses of his heroic bravery: he animated them by his eloquence, by the fire of his countenance, and particularly

by his misfortune. The very thing that the guards had intended to avert, was the consequence of their imprudence : the people murmured, expressed their disapprobation, and communicated their sentiments to one another.

They ran, and hastily arming themselves with what came first to hand, the lance shone by the side of the instrument of agriculture, and the polished helmet near the humble cap of the artisan. They surrounded, they pressed about Metusko : they were going to attack the escort, which, though intimidated by superior numbers, nevertheless, put themselves in a posture of defence.

The Poles were on the point of destroying each other : Metusko alone could spare the effusion of blood, and he was magnanimous enough to do it, whatever might be the fate for which he was reserved.

"My countrymen," said he, "may be ungrateful :—republicans were always so : but posterity shall not reproach me with having willingly caused the death of a single Polishman. I have liberated my country, I have done my duty, she neglects hers : however, I am yet to see whether there are judges whose hearts are so callous as to let them doom to the scaffold the saviour of Poland. My true, my faithful friends, you shall not expose your lives, you shall not involve the safety, the happiness of your wives and children. I expect, I wish only one service from you, but it will be dear to me :—conduct your general to Blonie : let him appear before the tribunal surrounded by the witness of his glory : let their presence prove his justification, and let those who have dragged me hither henceforth confine themselves to the vile employment of accusers :—it suits their grovelling souls."

These words added astonishment and respect to the admiration and respect which Metusko already inspired : he was released from his escort, a living rampart was raised between him and them, and every one was anxious to touch his garments, his spurs, or the trappings of his horse ; all were desirous of following him to hear his justification, or to snatch him from punishment by main force, if, in fact, he should be found guilty.

He was freed from his indignant bonds, and had a sword put into his hand : he was no longer a criminal, dragged by vile myrmidons before the tribunal ; but a great man who, surrounded by his friends, was going to brave injustice, and, if necessary, to die as he had lived.

His lieutenants, confused at these proceedings, retired behind the procession : rage and malice were in their hearts, but they dared not give vent to their feelings, or even lift their eyes on the hero whom they had so atrociously traduced.

Such grandeur of soul, a conduct so disinterested, will, doubtless, astonish on the part of a warrior who, taking advantage of favourable circumstances, might have regained his freedom and avenged himself on his enemies. But perhaps he was thoroughly persuaded that no judges would presume to condemn him : perhaps he knew that Polinska was still at liberty : perhaps he flattered himself that time had weakened the sense of his outrage, and that she would not be insensible to the glory of saving a man like him : he was, at least, certain that he considered his own honour far above his life, and that he intended it should descend with him unsullied to the tomb.

Scarcely had he entered Blonie, scarcely had he pronounced the name of Polinska, when he understood that he was a father. A new sentiment kindled in his heart, and replaced the contempt of life he had nourished. It was still desirable, he clung to it, and hoped he should be indebted for it to his son. Illiterate, like all the nobles of his time, he caused a letter to be written to Polinska from the palace, in which his word alone retained him prisoner.

This letter was filled with expressions of tenderness : it was dictated by the inflexibility of his disposition : he simply solicited an interview that the law authorized him to demand, and which the rank of Polinska did not prevent her from granting.

This unfortunate victim was deploring her fate : her son was attempting to dry her tears, and Sobieski was at her feet when she received this cruel letter. To see Metusko, to hear him, to speak to him, was to her the most dreadful of punishments : to refuse his request was impossible.

Sobieski, agitated by a thousand different emotions, strove to retain her in the castle : he wished to fly with her from the evils that menaced them, and pressed her, with respect and submission, to adopt this resolution : a moment afterwards, he imperiously required that she should publicly accept his hand, after having suffered to be punished as he deserved, a man whom nothing obliged her to save, and whose interests ought to be protected by the country alone.

Presently, touched by the ingratitude of the Poles, he

forgot his love, and wept over the fate of a hero whose great qualities he admired, and whose zealous defender he would certainly have been, had he not, like him, pretended to the hand of Polinska.

To forsake such a character seemed dreadful to him : to sacrifice to him the object of his ardent tenderness, was an effort above his strength : this idea alone brought him back to the recollection of a crime which appeared to him unpardonable ; and revived in his bosom the animosity he had conceived and vowed against its author.

It was, however, necessary to come to a determination. Sobieski could only give utterance to complaints and impressions against his destiny : his lover, to sighs, tears, and repeated promises to be always faithful to him. A second message from Metusko announced that time pressed, and that he expected to enjoy the permission which the law granted. The unhappy Polinska arose, traversed her apartments supported by her women and attended by Sobieski ; who, unable to bear this cruel separation, followed her with his eyes, after having conjured her twenty times not to forget her oaths.

The strength and fortitude of Polinska completely failed her when she entered the hall where the criminal awaited her arrival. The presence, the cold and severe air of the judges assembled to receive the expression of her will, added to her confusion. Metusko advanced a few paces and seemed desirous of assisting her : his crime, the miseries it had occasioned her, the horrors of this disgusting interview, all that can shock an imagination already weakened by so many attacks, conspired at once to assail her : she started back at the sight of her violator, closed her eyes, and sunk into the arms of Clotilde, who conducted her to a seat appointed for her.

The warrior had not expected that his appearance would produce such a terrible effect : he had prepared himself with the arguments that he thought best adapted to persuade Polinska : her trouble, her paleness, her fainting, agitated him greatly ; his remorse revived with all its force, and what the united strength of the empire had not been able to compass, a timid woman effected in an instant. Metusko, embarrassed, confused, deprived of courage and speech, was ready to fall at her feet.

When Polinska was restored to herself, they regarded each other awhile in profound silence : the judges invit-

Metusko to speak. More master of himself, he first recovered the free use of his senses, and after a pause,—

“Madam,” said he, “let us not recal the remembrance of the past, it would be cruel to you, and humiliating to me: I will, therefore, confine myself to the present. Your fate is so far connected with mine, that what I have to say cannot be regarded by you with indifference. Hear me with tranquillity: my expressions shall have a reference to the respect with which you inspire me.

“I am not so fondly attached to life as to solicit you to redeem it, though it should have cost you no other sacrifice than what you now make, were none but myself involved in the decision you are to make. But, madam, if I am accountable to your family, to your friends, to Poland herself, for a fault which nothing can excuse, you yourself would become so by refusing to restore your injured honour by an act in your power, and which I am willing to join in performing.

“I will not speak to you of my sentiments: I have long entertained for you only those of the profoundest esteem. It is the perfectly tranquil state of my heart which ought to render you secure with respect to the consequences of a union that must, doubtless, appear odious to you. Resume the place in society which you are entitled to occupy, the consideration, of which I alone have deserved to be deprived; and I swear by my honour, (you may know whether Metusko is incapable of failing in that,) I swear to quit you the moment we descend from the altar, to leave you at liberty in whatever place you may think fit to reside, never to see you again if you desire that prohibition should be imposed, and above all, not to form a pretension to those rights of which I am too well convinced I am unworthy.”

He ceased, and waited for a reply, which Polinska was far from being in a state to make him: her ear had only been struck by sounds, the sense of which her extreme disorder did not permit her to comprehend, and she remained mute and immoveable. The judges, affected at her painful situation, pressed her immediately to break up the assembly herself, by declaring whether or no she would accept Metusko for her husband.

“No, no,” exclaimed she in a tone of anguish, and scarcely able to articulate a word, “never, no, never!”

“I am aware,” resumed the warrior, “that you are in-

fluenced by a passion for another : Sobieski alone induces you to reject an engagement that your reason approves. But, madam, ought all your affections to centre in him ? Do not the claims of your son balance those of your lover ? It is for him that I still presume to raise my voice. Will you one day consent to render him satisfaction for his father's blood which he will demand of you, for the station in society of which you will have been the means of depriving him : and when the attachment, to which you sacrifice everything, shall be weakened or severed by time, and you shall be enabled to judge your conduct dispassionately, will you preserve your existence hated by your child and despised by yourself ? Weigh these considerations, madam : you are a mother, by a crime, I confess ; but the duties imposed by that title ought not to be held by you as less sacred."

At the name of her son, Polinska became attentive, and the picture placed before her by Metusko extremely affected her. She had not the courage to renounce the public esteem, much less to forfeit the tenderness of her child, the most indispensable blessing to a feeling mother. She forgot, for a moment, Sobieski : she hesitated. Clotilda, in a low voice reminded her of those words solemnly pronounced in the wood-cutter's cottage : *I will adopt your son, and you may expect from my generosity that I will treat him with the tenderness of a father.* The reasons of Metusko had shaken her resolution : the interference of Clotilda restored her to love : she saw nothing but Sobieski : she firmly repeated her refusal to wed Metusko, and left the assembly.

Force alone seemed now to be the only resource of this great man : the sentence of death was about to issue from the mouth of the presiding judge. "I ask but an hour," said he, addressing the tribunal ; "and if Polinska persist in her resolution, I am ready to die."

So short a delay was not denied to the obscurest criminal : they easily acceded to the wish of a hero. He had still ground for hope : one of his friends who had softened his captivity on the road, had taken advantage of the absence of Polinska : he had found means to introduce himself into the castle, and gold, liberally presented, had gained him free access to the infant. Young as he was, he was not insensible to the interest that he ought to take in his father's fate : his tender heart was forcibly struck with the danger to which he was exposed ; and his uncommon natural un-

derstanding made him readily comprehend the line of conduct he was conjured to pursue.

The gestures, the inflexions of the voice, the expressions, all were repeated to him over and over again ; and his own internal conviction assisting a retentive memory, the scene could not be otherwise than energetic, affecting in the extreme, and the effect of it was no longer doubtful.

Polinska was returning to congratulate herself upon her resistance in the presence of Sobieski, and receive from him his thanks, his protestations, his endearments, for so much love and constancy. She was tranquil, even happy : her son perceived her ; he ran, he flew, he started across the drawbridge, and throwing himself at his mother's feet, while his innocent hands pressed the bottom of her robe :—

"Never," said he, "will I quit this position, until you have granted me the life of my father ! If you reject my prayer, spurn me from your arms, repulse me far from you, despise the tears which flow from the eyes of a dutiful child for his unhappy sire : go, be united to your lover whom I disdain, whose offers of kindness I abhor, while I fly to the embraces of a parent whose name I am proud to bear : I will console him, I will support his courage : my tender caresses shall conceal the approach of the fatal blow, as it will soften the pangs of death, when I will return covered with blood, and say, and incessantly repeat to you : *Madam, the work is yours : yours will be the repentance !*"

No part of this oration was natural to the child, but the energetic tone in which he pronounced it. He was not even of an age to be able to appreciate the menaces which it did not belong to him to address to his mother, but which it was impossible for her to resist. She was almost vanquished : the boy completed his success by these sallies of ingenuity and sentiment, by those delicious caresses, by those ardent prayers, which never fail to carry persuasion to the maternal heart.

"Let him live," cried Polinska, "let his son inform him that I yield, and that I am ready to swear to be miserable for the remainder of my life."

The child was raised in the arms of his father's friend, and they soon arrived at the place of his confinement. Meanwhile, Polinska shut herself up, and particularly forbade that Sobieski should be admitted to approach her : should she see him again she was lost.

The young Palatine had been apprized that his lover was returned, after having abandoned her rival to his fate. He ran to her apartment, overflowing with gratitude and love : Clotilda declared to him that he had no longer anything to expect, and that she must deny him even the consolation of uttering his complaints to Polinska.

He must, doubtless, have been pretty well accustomed to the alternatives of hope and despair, between which he for a long time had dragged on his existence. Nevertheless, there are shocks impossible to be provided for, and against which, reason is perfectly impotent. That which he had just met with, re-plunged him into one of these crises in which the man who is the most reflective, the most moderate, the most courageous, is no longer master of himself.

Sobieski forced open the apartment of Polinska : he could listen to nothing : reproaches were mingled with caresses, and menaces with prayers. Polinska, terrified, agitated beyond expression,—Polinska, always unmoved when the presence of her son did not support her against herself,—Polinska, however, made a last effort : she spoke to her lover with that dignity which commands attention from the most exasperated man : she opposed inflexibility to entreaties, and calmness to violence : she ordered Sobieski to quit the castle, prohibited him from even entering it again, and withdrew to a retired cabinet. It was time : she had exhausted the whole fortitude of her sex :—she had only the choice of flying or falling into the arms of Sobieski.

Left alone, a prey to his afflicting thoughts, the young warrior abandoned himself to all the excesses which announce absolute phrensy, or which, at least, are the forerunners of it. His groans, his imprecations resounded through the different apartments of the castle : whatever came beneath his hands was shattered to atoms, or torn into a thousand pieces. Clotilda trembled : she called in Wilfrid. Sobieski had drawn his sword, the point was turned to his breast, he was about to die, and thus complete the misery of his mistress.

The old man, assisted by several domestics, at length wrenched from his hands the murdering steel, seized him, bore him off, and carried him away from a spot where each object he saw reminded him of Polinska, and added to his fury. They flattered themselves they should be able to conduct him in security out of the city, and succeed in calm-

ing his transports ; but, escaping from them at the corner of a street, he ran to the palace where Metusko was still guarded as a prisoner.

The warrior, for the first time, was embracing his son, and while he held him in his arms, he forgot his brilliant career and the disgraces which had followed it. A man rushed into the room in wild disorder, and threw himself at his feet. "They have prevented me from taking away my life," cried he ; "in pity, deprive me of it, or restore me that which can alone render it supportable."

Sobieski did not reflect that it was the death of Metusko which he asked of Metusko himself : the hero made this observation to him, while he raised him up with kindness ; and the youthful lover saw, through the mist that obscured his ideas, that neither of them could be perfectly happy, but by the destruction of the other. Metusko agreed to this conclusion, but, notwithstanding, refused the combat proposed to him by his rival.

"My reputation for courage," said he to him, "is established : I will not fight against a man dear to Polinska, and I am not afraid that my moderation should be taken for cowardice."

Sobieski then felt that his mistress was inevitably lost to him : his head suddenly became giddy, his limbs benumbed, he fell senseless on the floor. Advantage was taken of this unhappy condition, to convey him to a house without the city, where he received all the assistance that art could afford, and Wilfrid never lost sight of him for a moment. "Alas !" said Metusko, as the attendants were conducting him from his presence, "I am making two persons miserable, who have constantly cultivated virtue, and I have no other claim to happiness or even to life than my crime !"

Meantime, the judges had retired, the tokens of captivity had disappeared, and the warrior was informed that Polinska was ready to meet him at the altar. He took his son by the hand : this child must be constantly between him and his mother : he alone could weaken the horror that his presence inspired. He found the unfortunate victim in the midst of her women : their melancholy looks sufficiently announced the situation of their mistress. She alone did violence to her feelings : she appeared calm, and offered him her hand : Metusko took it, but dared not press it with his own : he even feared to raise his eyes on Polinska. The last effort of her fortitude was to encourage the man whom

she was about to accept as her husband : this effort was worthy of Polinska : she retained command enough over herself to make it.

The ceremony began : the formidable words were going to be pronounced, the victim maintained her firmness. She swore to Metusko a fidelity which she was incapable of violating, and a love that did not depend upon herself to experience. But, scarcely had the terrible oath escaped her lips, when she sunk down on the steps of the altar.

"This is too much," cried Metusko, "she has fulfilled her duty, and learned me to know mine." Then, addressing himself to Clotilda, "Conduct back your mistress," said he, "when she revives, place her son in her arms : tell her that Metusko is desirous she should live, and that he will still afford her the means."

She was conveyed to the castle, anguish on her countenance, and death in her heart. The caresses of her child restored her to a full sense of her wretchedness : she looked sorrowfully around her, slowly turning herself to every part of the room : she named not her husband, but it was perceived that she noticed his absence, and was not insensible to his respectful behaviour. A messenger solicited and obtained admittance : his paleness, his agitation announced the nature of his errand. He delivered a letter to Polinska which she opened and read :

"I was not born to perish on a scaffold, accompanied with the idea of a son, an outcast from the bosom of society, of a woman I had dishonoured, and of a rival so alive to her charms, so struck with her worth, as to be willing to partake her shame. I was desirous of becoming your husband, it was my duty to offer this only reparation in my power, it was yours to consent to it ; but, it would be injustice itself to make you atone for my fault by a life of unhappiness after that I have already caused you. You have fulfilled your duty towards your son and his father : I will perform mine to you and Sobieski. I leave you the heir of my name and of my glory : he will learn you to drop a tear to my memory, and my death will restore me your esteem."

Metusko, on leaving the temple, had shut himself up in the apartment destined for him by Polinska. Disgusted with the obscurity to which the ingratitude of his country condemned him, struck with the despair of Sobieski, with the kind of heroism of his bride, he conceived the idea of equalling her fortitude her self-devotion. An active poison

circulated in his veins ; and he had scarcely strength to dictate his dying sentiments to the minister who attended him in his last moments.

As soon as he had ceased to be a bar between Polinska and her lover, she felt convinced of the great qualities of the husband she had lost, she forgot his guilt, she saw him only as the father of her child, and sincerely regretted him.

This mourning, however, could not be of long duration : Sobieski, by degrees resumed all his former claims that duty had merely been able to suspend, and that no power could have destroyed. A year, which seemed long, notwithstanding the charms of a prospect that nothing could thenceforth overcloud, a year was given to decorum, and the remainder of their lives to love.

From this union sprang the ancestors of the famous Sobieski ; who, while only grand-martial of the crown, liberated Poland from the yoke of the Turks. The victory of Chokzim gave him the sceptre that he rendered illustrious by the deliverance of Vienna, and by an assemblage of talents but too rarely met with in sovereigns.

THE BASTARD OF NORMANDY.

CHAPTER I.

It was on the banks of the river Seine, towering on a gradual ascent, fronted by a thick cluster of trees, that stood so formidably united, as to repel alike the rude blasts of winter, or the sultry scorching of the summer's heat ; wedged around, like some reverend aged pile, with friendly clusters of encircling ivy, and rendered both by every effort of nature and of art, the best asylum of virtue and of peace.

In this delightful spot, stood the castle of the Chevalier de Barre.

The chevalier, in his younger days, had fought for his country and his king : declining, therefore, as he now was, in the vale of years, and fatigued with public toils, some calm retreat became his fondest wish. Age, however, sat with reverence on his aspect : it was a prospect, though dimmed by the hard unrelenting hand of time, that shewed the traces of honour and of virtue.

The chevalier also, in his juvenile years, had been linked in the tenderest bonds with a fair maid of Poitiers. This affection, however, though it could boast the most reciprocal ardour, had never been sanctioned by the nuptial form, having nature for its source alone ; the pride of ancestry ever warred against the sacred tie. Inclination, notwithstanding, swelled high in the bosom of de Barre, and he waited only for the levelling hand of time, which makes the peasant and the king alike, to call his Anna, *Wife*.

The unequal chance of fate, which oftener militates against the good than bad intent, soon overwhelmed the virtuous hope and honest love of de Barre into an abyss of irretrievable despair. The awful crisis rapidly advanced, when Anna was to produce the tender fruit of their mutual loves. The anxious moment came : the infant followed :

but followed only to be the innocent harbinger of its mother's speedy passage to the other world. Dying, she embraced her beloved lord, and begged him, in faltering accents, to call her infant, in remembrance of his unhappy mother, *De Poitiers*. De Barre, raving and distracted, promised her he would : offered his own life to the Supreme Being, would he but vouchsafe to save his dearest Anna's. She dropped a tear ; then, casting a look of divine effervescence on the despairing chevalier, she softly murmured, "Be a father to my child : be as kind to him as you have ever been to me, and I die contented. Farewell, my beloved lord :—my dearest lord,—adieu." Thus Anna sunk to dust.

De Barre, after this cruel and trying event, was sinking fast into a gloomy depth of inactivity and despair : nothing appeared to alleviate his transports of grief, but the presence and innocent manners of his darling boy, his beloved Henry de Poitiers : to him alone he looked for consolation : he only could afford the least interval of hope, or even momentarily soften the thick shade of sorrow, in which all his faculties were so thoroughly absorbed.

The friends and kindred of the chevalier, every way apprehensive that this gloomy habit of mind and body, which increased upon him every day and hour, would terminate at last in a fatal dissolution, prevailed upon him to assist his king and country in the wars, wherein they were then most dangerously involved : so, naturally of a brave and martial spirit, the chevalier did not require many incentives to stimulate him to the enterprize : glory was a spur that roused him to the quick, and soon re-kindled the fading embers of his despairing soul : to live for his king and country was a charm irresistible ; but, to live for his son, his Henry, and living, to train him up to deeds of courage and of glory, of honour, and of virtue, were powers of such energetic attraction, as to infuse into him a spirit renovated and unextinguishable.

On the eve, however, of de Barre's departure to the wars, he placed his son Henry under the tuition and protection of an aged and faithful branch of his house : he was preferred to the most learned of the Normans, deservedly preferred, as the chevalier on his return from the field of battle, found his boy exactly what he wished him to be, of a disposition that was brave, generous and humane : of a form so manly, and withal so open, as to carry about it the same sentiments, that were so nobly inscribed within.

De Barre, having seen the war concluded to the honour and glory of his country, retired from the bustle of the court, to his castle on the banks of the Seine : in this retreat, he was accompanied by Henry de Poitiers and his aged counsellor. To these inducements of retirement, was added, the vicinity of his kinsman's castle, Robert le Devot : he had long back married into the family of de Barre, and the chevalier, having no legitimate successors, was now looked upon as the heir of that illustrious house.

CHAPTER II.

ROBERT le Devot, though born of an ancient and noble house, was reduced, through the splendour that his ancestors had formerly maintained, to live retired in his castle on the banks of the Seine, to recover that affluence, by his temperance and frugality, which they had wasted in luxury and prodigality.

At a very early age, Le Devot had married Veronica, a near kinswoman of the Chevalier de Barre, sprung from a race which was as famous for its opulence as its nobility ; and, taught by a few years' experience, to know the inequality to which she had been linked, Veronica began to entertain that contempt for her lord, which, too often, pursues the wretched lot of poverty : as she was the only hope from which Le Devot could expect to restore the grandeur of his house, her pride and her reproaches became the more and more pungent and insupportable, as the decay of the De Barres began to advance.

The haughty and unfeeling temper of Veronica, however, was not the only domestic misfortune that embittered the repose of Robert : Lodowick, his son, was the counterpart of Veronica, possessing her haughtiness of spirit and the same cruel inflexibility of soul, inheriting, at the same time, her noble majesty of person and her engaging insinuation of manners ; curst with the same pride, the same dissimulation, and the same vices, without an individual virtue to balance the contrary extremes ; entertaining the same wishes, and nourishing the same hatreds, in short, tutored by Veronica in her own pursuit and desires, Lodowick despised his father for the prudent resignation and calm inactivity with which he guided his conduct and met the adversity of his fate.

Adelina, Robert's second child, his darling daughter, the ultimate hope of all his fond joys and wishes, had been lost to him when scarcely two summers old. The nurse who had been entrusted with this invaluable charge, having occasion to visit a dying relation at St. ———, took Adelina to accompany her there also: near the forest, however, which leads thither, the equipage which had been sent with them by Le Devot, was stopped by robbers, and they cruelly slaughtered: the ruffians having stripped the dead bodies, left them exposed in the road, and made their escape into the woods: the murder of so many people, when discovered in the morning, making a great noise through the country, it could not fail of soon coming to the ears of Le Devot: the grief and horror he experienced on this occasion, may be easier conceived than described; suffice it to say, that he made every possible search for the hapless corpse of his Adelina, but no remains or symbols of her could anywhere be found: the dead bodies of the nurse and all her followers still continued, but not a single trace of the infant was to be discovered: this adventure, though bearing with it so extraordinary an appearance, afforded, however, a small glimpse of future expectation to the soul of Robert: the remains of Adelina being undiscoverable, it was possible that she might still exist: some charitable hands (so thought Le Devot) might have happily intervened, and preserved the existence of his child! Then, hope cast her mantle over the vast heap of Robert's sorrows, and whispered in his distracted ear, that he might, possibly, behold his Adelina once again.

Le Devot, thus unhappy, thus torn with domestic miseries, thrice blessed the hour that brought the Chevalier De Barre to the banks of the Seine: in his social converse, he knew how well to beguile the weary hour on, and how to compensate for the want of dearer ties, in the pleasing bonds of friendship.

If the arrival of De Barre afforded such exquisite sensations to the soul of Robert, on the other hand, it struck Veronica with anguish and despair. De Barre, alone and unincumbered, would have cheered her ambitious spirit: his decay, his old age, would have proved continual fetters for her towering mind: but, to become clogged, as he did, with Henry De Poitiers,—to behold her son Lodowick opposed by bastardy, rivalled by the prurient issue of a peasant's blood, to Veronica,—the bare thought was worse

then racks : her daring spirit grasped at all : to find, therefore, a competitor to her hopes ; and a competitor, such as she imagined Henry De Poitiers then to be, made her soul sick with horrible conceits, gave her contriving mind continual food for plots, stirred her ambition to the quick, and made her *devil* more than *woman*.

CHAPTER III.

DE BARRE, whose enlarged soul from its first respiration teemed with every good, with every noble attribute, soon caught a sincere affection for Veronica and Lodowick ; regarding the latter in the same tender view as his boy Henry, not as a bare kinsman of a distant tie, but as a son, as the virtuous offspring of his dear and ancient friend.

Veronica and Lodowick, easily discovering this generous turn and fortunate prepossession of the chevalier, never after suffered any opportunity to pass of improving that esteem he had for them, so far as their art and dissimulation could possibly extend : self-interest and future prospects demanded some sacrifice of their inclinations, and caused them, though with most unwilling hands, to put on the vizard of hypocrisy, and wear a mantle of deceit, which both their hearts inveterately abhorred.

This forced deportment, however, of mother and son, though built upon so vile a fabric, answered one happy purpose, of establishing for a time, that tranquillity in the house of Le Devot, to which it had long been a stranger.

De Barre, who had ever been taught to believe, not from report only, but even from the mouth of his kinsman, that the bitterest dissensions had long subsisted in his family, was not only surprised, but greatly rejoiced, to find so joyful an alteration : even Le Devot himself wondered at so sudden and so extraordinary a change ; a change, which restored tranquillity in every mind, and in every part : which turned his wonted gloominess to a calm serenity, and afforded a pleasing presage, that the remainder of his days would pass away undisturbed by future domestic miseries.

Henry De Poitiers and Lodowick now grew up like two stout oaks, whose strength and superior force of body gave them a dignity, which eclipsed all other objects that surrounded them. At the chase, at the proud exercise of the

spear and shield, the javelin, sword, battle-axe, and every manly, noble enterprize, they contended stoutly for the palm of conquest ; and, where the Chevalier or Le Devot could not mingle in the exercise, they stood the umpires of the well-disputed feat.

Henry De Poitiers, though he excelled in strength and activity, was surpassed by Lodowick in the pleasing insinuation of his manners and address : his tongue was temperate and placid as the silver stream, undisturbed by the smallest breeze : Henry's, was the honest echo of his heart ; Lodowick's, on the other hand, the most distant : dissimulation was a stranger to the one ; in the other, it might be called a masterpiece : De Poitiers esteemed Lodowick as a brother, as a friend : Lodowick only assumed those noble characters, blackening them, beneath the cloak of artifice, pretending to feel the warmest and most inviolable attachment for De Poitiers, though, at the same time, he abhorred his person, despised his bastardy, detested his illegitimate alliance, and altogether hated him, with the rankest inveteracy, for daring to be his rival.

Thus stood the families of De Barre and Le Devot, apparently united in the strict bonds of friendship and unanimity : two years had already passed, since the chevalier had first retired to his castle, on the banks of the Seine. Henry de Poitiers and Lodowick, had now attained the ripe years of manhood, becoming the hopes and glory of their illustrious sires. Veronica, the revengeful, designing Veronica, had, in this interval, fed the flames of hatred and ambition in her bosom till it came to such a glow, that it almost burst for evaporation, waiting only for a favourable crisis to overwhelm innocence and honourable old age in a horrible conflagration.

CHAPTER IV.

LE DEVOT, after such a period of concord and tranquillity, began to imagine that his future peace and happiness were irremoveably established : to think it almost beyond the power of any ill fate to disturb the general unanimity that prevailed. These pleasing anticipations, however, lasted only like a transient dream, evanescent as the unsubstantial shadow when eclipsed by some passing cloud but momentarily formed, and as momentarily annihilated.

Robert, having wandered in his gardens further than he usually prescribed himself in his morning rambles, was struck with the sound of a voice raised to a pitch of the most impassioned energy, and which, on his approach, he soon discovered to be that of Veronica's : advancing still nearer, his curiosity received fresh stimulation : concealing himself therefore behind the arbour where Veronica was seated, he soon found that the person with whom she was so warmly engaged, was no other than his son Lodowick. "Fatal destiny ! must we, and all our race, for ever pine in slavish poverty ? For ever," continued Veronica, "slumber on this coarse, this unambitious pillow of obscurity ? No, no, Lodowick, heaven forbid that we should rest upon it one day, one hour, nay, one moment longer ; though your father will succeed his kinsman in his titles and the hereditary pr patrimony of the house, which, we know, is but as a drop of water poured into yonder fountain, when compared with the riches that both De Barre and his ancestors have acquired in the wars : what are titles, then, without wealth to support its honours, and aggrandize their name ? We shall enjoy these empty baubles then, whilst De Poitiers inherits the more substantial part ; with which he may acquire titles, ennoble his illegitimate name, and soon surpass a noble and honourable house ; therefore, it is plain, my son, that whilst this bastard Henry, this gamesome produce of the harlot Poitiers' blood exists, we shall lie grappling in the dust : is it not so, Lodowick ? Then, it is equally as plain, that he must either die, or we must cease to live : for thus to live, to breathe the common air like the base-born peasantry, is worse by far than death. Unsuspicious, therefore, as both Le Devot and De Barre must be of our intent, and misguided withal by our dissimulation and constrained love, we can effect the death of Henry without suspicion entering on either side : poison will soon consume his bastard blood : soon mix it in the original drain of obscurity, from which it first received its source, and lost therein, no longer disturb our peace, our future hopes, or the noble channel of our house."

"Poison," replied Lodowick, after some moments of contemplation, "administered with every precaution as it may, must lay some one of the house open to suspicion ; though De Barre mistrusts us not, mother ; and, though De Poitiers confides so deeply in our mutual friendship, my father no doubt, will turn his eye towards us as the

serpents that have stung his kinsman's bastard : he knows full well, Veronica, your noble spirit,—knows that soaring mind has deeply touched him for his inactive torpor,—knows that you have laid the path of ambition open to his sight ; marked it out with three-edged conviction : all this he knows you have pointed out, and he has never dared to execute : conscious, moreover, must he be, that your undaunted spirit dwells in me : like you, I dare to soar above the track of obscurity ; and, like you, am ever panting to raise the glory of our house, let come whatever may : knowing, therefore, our sentiments as he does, mistrust will soon point us out as the poisoners of Henry : then, mark me, mother : I have a safer and speedier way to spill De Poitiers' blood : the bastard, common it is to every eye, eager of spirit, and topmost in every exploit, precipitates into the foremost dangers : the chase is his favourite pursuit, the boar his darling victim : to-morrow, then, when we shall penetrate the forest, and when De Poitiers' arm is raised to fell the hunted animal on the plain, my arrow, as though directed by the fatal hand of misguided fate, shall hurl him to the very death he meant to deal."

No sooner had Lodowick thus told his bloody purpose, than Veronica, as though deprived of speech, with savage joy rose from her seat, and embraced him with such energetic silence, as speaks more forcibly than words, the tumult of extasy that reigns within : then, taking him by the arm, with rapturous delight, they left their shelter, and bent their steps towards the castle.

Le Devot, who had so fortunately continued undiscovered behind the arbour, still remained there petrified with horror and astonishment : for a time, he was unable to move. Villany of so dark and so horrible an aspect, had struck him inactive as marble, his soul was enveloped in a mist, which thought could not for some time extricate him from : hearing, however, the approach of some footstep, and fearful of being surprised, his dormant faculties, in a small degree, revived : so far relieved, he followed Veronica and Lodowick to the castle, without being able, however, to assist the agony of his mind with the smallest ray of contemplation.

CHAPTER V.

THAT same day as Robert had discovered the barbarous designs of his wife and son, being devoted to the company of De Barre at his castle, the family of Le Devots repaired thither, according to mutual appointment. Hospitality, (in the person of De Poitiers,) with an ardour which fully bespoke his honesty and good intent, flew to meet the guests at the outward castle-gate : Le Devot, Veronica, and his comrade Lodowick, he welcomed with all that respect and friendship, which demanded from the latter the most grateful return : with an extorted complacency, however, they returned his honest salutations, and received his earnest greetings with a smile and affected gratitude, which Le Devot, conscious of their hypocrisy, regarded with a look demonstrative of every detestation. De Barre having congratulated his kinsmen and Veronica, with all his wonted affection and hospitality, made them sit down to a repast, at which, simplicity and a welcome fare, had a greater proportion than luxury or a constrained prodigality. That being concluded, the chevalier, with most evident tokens of joy and satisfaction, produced a letter from his bosom, which he said to have received that morning from the Marquis St. Amand, his dear friend and fellow-soldier. Anxious (continued De Barre) to procure my dear boy, Lodowick, an honourable station, equal to his birth, and the friendship I have ever borne *thee*, Le Devot, I wrote, a few days back, to the Marquis, requesting his interest in obtaining a post in the army for my young kinsman. Here, then, is the answer I have received, which, happily, informs me that the vacancy of colonel will take place in the course of a few months, and that I might depend on my kinsman's supplying the deficiency.

Thus far, Lodowick, I have proved successful ; and at the same time, rendered thoroughly happy, in being enabled to procure you so honourable a post : a post which I am every way confident that your courage and abilities will render you worthy of ; not only, my boy, in the noble character of a soldier, but as the stout unshaken pillar of a house which your ancestors, to this day, have transmitted unsullied down.

Le Devot, when he heard this convulsive, this noble, dis-

interested mark of De Barre's friendship and generosity, was overwhelmed with the deepest sentiments of enthusiastic gratitude : a tear most forcibly bespoke the thrilling sensations that he experienced ; and an honest tear it was, proceeding from an equally honest heart. This emanation, however, tender as it proved, was but of transient durance, soon forced to vanish before the opposite feelings of pity, remorse and anguish ; for to behold, nearly in the same moment, the gallant Henry De Poitiers, embrace the treacherous Lodowick, with all the warmth of generous friendship ; and afterwards, with equal noble greatness, congratulate the cruel Veronica on the approaching happiness of her son ; when, conscious as they were, of the horrible villany meditated against his sacred life, was a tragedy of so deep a dye, that made Le Devot's honest bosom shudder.

De Barre, supposing that the discovery of his letter was the cause of those emotions so visible in the behaviour of Robert, proposed to his kindred that they should circuit the environs of the castle, till such time as he returned an answer to the Marquis St. Amand : this being generally assented to, they all left the chevalier to his studies.

The gloomy deportment of Le Devot, which had so closely hung upon him since his discovery of the plot in the arbour, did not escape the observation of De Poitiers, and at the same time, fail of touching his sensibility. Discovering his friend, therefore, thus deeply enveloped in melancholy, and oppressed by some secret anguish, Henry took an opportunity, as Veronica and Lodowick wandered from the path that Robert had fixed upon, to question the cause of woe, that had so suddenly taken possession of his soul ! The anxiety and tenderness which accompanied this request of De Poitiers were too powerful for the sensibility of Le Devot to withstand. So tenderly overcome, so generously vanquished, he clasped the honest youth by the hand ; and, with a torrent of tears, ingenuously made him acquainted with the whole plot he had discovered behind the arbour : adding, afterwards, his most strenuous entreaties, that he would henceforward refrain from his favourite diversion, so far at least, till his son Lodowick was invested with his commission.

Henry De Poitiers, at the revelation of Le Devot's horrible tale, found himself for some time, equally as incapable of motion as of thought. The history he had heard strangled

every idea, and immersed his whole train of thoughts in a wilderness of horror. To suspect the veracity of Le Devot was almost impossible : whilst, on the other hand, it was nearly as impossible to credit the villany that Lodowick had been branded with : to determine, therefore, this uncertainty of mind, Henry was determined to put the business to the proof ; for, till now, he had been used to confide as much in the son as in the sire. Fear, he knew not, and death he scorned : thus determined, he communicated his purpose to Le Devot, accompanied with a firmness which the old man saw was in vain to resist. One point he gained from Henry, and that was, to avail himself so far of the discovery that had been made, to arm himself with every precaution against the morrow's chase. Not only will I do that, my friend, (exclaimed De Poitiers,) as being essential to blunt the edge of sacrilegious murder ; but, if attempted, must look upon the stroke at a bosom that never did him wrong, and at a heart that dares revenge a deed, which bears the stamp of so black, so unprovoked, and so villanous a nature.

CHAPTER VI.

THE next morning at sunrise, the castles of De Barre and Le Devot were roused, to mingle in the pursuits of the chase. Henry and Lodowick first appeared, mounted on their proudest coursers ; the former bearing a spear and shield ; the latter, a bow and quiver, filled with the choicest Norman arrows : next, Veronica came forth (though, in her, a rare custom so to do,) upon a palfrey, which rivalled the top of mount Caucasus for its unsullied whiteness : then her husband followed, eyeing her with the vigilance of a hawk, too conscious of her villanous designs, and still more inflamed with horror, by seeing her thus anxious to view the perpetration of the deed. Last, came the honest chevalier, who, unsuspecting of the black intent, and metted by the heroic appearance of his kinswoman, shook a score of years away, and panted with every ardour to be the foremost in the approaching chase.

Lodowick first starting a boar of an enormous size and most ferocious appearance, every bosom became instantly elated with the hope of conquest : each burned to deal destruction on the savage animal : all gloried to hurl him

breathless on the plain. Henry, scornful of every danger, and anxious to discover the villany of his deceitful friend, pressed hardest on the ferocious prey, thereby giving him every opportunity to avail himself of what he wished. Le Devot, however, followed close on De Poitiers, resolved either to fall himself or prevent the meditated stroke : alarmed alike for the preservation of his friend and his child, he was determined to encounter every danger, rather than see the one or the other perish. The chevalier and Veronica, in the meantime, riding side by side, and discovering on a sudden that the boar was preparing to bend his course across the forest, turned alike as suddenly off, and met him front to front. De Barre, eager as the youngest in the field to oppose the thwarted animal, hurled his javelin with an irresistible force, and wounded him deeply in the flank. The beast, thus furiously attacked, and rendered more savage by this rude encounter, faced his assailants, and, leaping with all his power on the breast of Veronica's palfrey, he brought them like lightning to the ground. Danger now appeared on every side, and seemed prepared alike to overwhelm the guilty as the innocent. De Poitiers, however, conscious as he was, of Veronica's baseness, could not look tamely on, and see a woman perish : holding, therefore, a watchful eye on Lodowick, and keeping his bosom covered with his shield, he sprang onward to rescue his fallen kinswoman from the already extended jaws of the incensed boar. De Barre, however, being closest on the animal, pierced him a second time, deeper than at first, and sent him grovelling in the dust. The son, in the meantime, regardless of his mother's perilous state, and mindful alone of the general confusion that prevailed, grasped the opportunity by the head, and let fly an arrow at De Poitiers' breast. The intended victim, however, perceived the treacherous aim, and caught the weapon in his shield. Le Devot, though engaged with the chevalier in assisting Veronica on her palfrey, likewise continued to keep his eye on Lodowick, and, with horror, saw the meditated stroke. De Poitiers, confirmed by this attack of the traitor's murderous design, and incensed at the same time by such an unprovoked act of treachery, prepared to take revenge on the assassin with every vigour : advancing, therefore, on Lodowick, he attacked him furiously with his spear. This effort, however, had no further effect than dismounting his opponent who discovering the design, threw himself instantly

from his horse : De Poitiers leaped, likewise, immediately from his, though not before Lodowick had prepared a second arrow to execute his fatal purpose. His bow was already extended to its furthest stretch : he aimed the horrid stroke—the arrow flew, and carried with it bloody execution ! Soon drew the blood of innocence in copious streams : brought a sacred body on the plain : struck the vital spirit, not of De Poitiers, but of a father.

The generous, the unfortunate Le Devot, again perceiving a second weapon aimed, flew onward to avert its horrid course, and stop the sacrilegious arm that meditated it ; but, in this noble effort of interposition, he received the parricidal arrow in his own bosom. At such a deed all was horror, confusion and amazement. Revenge, so happily satisfied, took its distant flight, whilst agony and despair supplied her mournful vacancy.

Robert, the suffering Robert, finding death inevitable, and feeling it approach in a rapid pace, beseeched De Poitiers, who had first cast himself on the ground by his side, to order his conveyance to the castle, that he might there be suffered to draw his last breath, and there tell his last tale of woe.

CHAPTER VII.

DE BARRE, thoroughly ignorant of the origin that had occasioned this encounter and disaster, was involved in an abyss of the most inextricable astonishment. De Poitiers, however, took the earliest opportunity of relieving his anxiety and amazement, by telling the whole of the melancholy history, which was in all points strongly confirmed by the guilt and horror so glaringly pictured in the countenances both of Lodowick and his mother.

Le Devot, in the meantime being conveyed to the castle, and settled on a couch, he called his friends, his wife, his son, and all to come around him, addressing himself first to Lodowick : the generous Robert assured him from his soul, which was to be separated so speedily from his body, that he forgave him for the death that he had so unwittingly been the author of. " Let not remorse or despair, therefore," continued Le Devot, in the most affecting manner, " canker your thoughts with the torments of parricide : heaven, on the entreaties of a dying father, will overlook

the intent : I, then, from the inmost passages of my heart, forgive the deed. If a short time spent in sorrow and repentance for the design on the life of De Poitiers, can in anywise avail, I am confident that my dear Henry will accept of the atonement : the son of De Barre has a noble soul,—a heart generous and humane. Oh ! Lodowick, my boy, you had almost done a deed, from which even death itself never could have effaced the stain : happily, it came on me : happily, I may say, for I am old and weighed down with sorrow." How painful the reflection, too much so for the faint spirits of Robert to overcome !

De Poitiers, seizing the opportunity which this pause afforded, grasped the generous Le Devot by the hand, and with tears affirmed that he forgave his son sincerely, as he himself had done : "Lodowick," continued Henry, stretching out his arm, "here is my hand, which is but a bare external token of what my heart has for ever cancelled from its sacred register." Lodowick, stretching out his arm, as De Poitiers before had done, accepted the forgiveness offered, though with an appearance of sullenness, more than gratitude or sincerity.

Le Devot, happy in having witnessed this act of oblivion and forgiveness, proceeded, with somewhat more firmness. "Veronica, my dear wife," continued Robert, "I ever loved thee to the utmost of my soul : ambition, however, strangled that affection in you, which nothing but reciprocity could ever render permanent and happy : I forgive thee, however, that and all : the world, notwithstanding, will consider you the accomplice of your husband's murder ; therefore, take care and avoid the world's censure : here, take this ring ; it was given me by my sister, when last we parted : she is the abbess of a convent at Rouen : shew her that, and you will find every social comfort, every substantial happiness and devotional bliss that a sisterly affection, the tenderest assiduity, and the pure exercise of your religion can render you : therefore, Veronica, take this ring, and with it take my latest blessing."

Veronica on this took the ring ; but, it was with a stiffness, and in an uncouth manner, which bordered on the same sullenness, that before had actuated the behaviour of Lodowick.

"And now, my dear kinsman, with my beloved Harry," continued Robert, addressing himself to De Barre, and De Poitiers, "I, last of all, bid you adieu : little can I say, for,

virtuous and noble as you are, both God and man will protect and honour you : little can I say indeed; for death, alas ! draws near, and with a melancholy aspect, commands me to be brief : one thing more, then welcome death : then welcome immortality." Here the tears of the fading Robert began to flow. "My daughter, Adelina,—my dear, dear lost child : you understand me all : forgive this weakness, then,—a father's weakness,—the weakness of a departing man. These moments are my last : I find, therefore, in them a divinity hovering around : a spirit that hangs over my departing soul, which whispers me, she is still alive. I hoped to have seen my Adelina before I breathed my last. The Divine Power, however, forbids it, and his almighty will be done. My latest and most anxious entreaties, therefore, are, that if chance should throw her in to the arms of any here present, to cherish and comfort my infant, for her poor father's sake : to look upon Adelina as their sister, or their child. The mark you will find upon her," continued Robert, after a short pause, "which heaven, perhaps, in its great bounty set upon her, to discover both her birth and parents, is a grape, of a blue colour, on the left side of which lies a small green leaf, both of them hanging beneath her right breast. Veronica can corroborate it well ; for Veronica panted for the grape before my dear Adelina ever beheld the light. So many years having passed by, and in hopes, from the circumstances attending on her loss, of seeing her again before I died, I delayed the recital of this sad tale till the last stage of life's short journey ; therefore, dwell upon it well—mark it all : and thou, Lodowick, my son, if thou ever seest the spot upon thy sister's neck, or ought that may lead thee to the knowledge of Adelina, press her to thy heart, and be to her both a brother and a father. Much more I cannot say : farewell :—*the grape and the green leaf, forget not !* and, oh ! if any here ever sees the innocent possessor of them, tell her that her father blessed—thrice blessed her, in his last dying moments. Harry, my virtuous boy, adieu !"—Then Robert Le Devot, with these last words, expired.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE melancholy catastrophe of Robert Le Devot shed a gloom over the castles of both houses. which, but a few

days before, had, apparently, been the asylums of peace, happiness and good-fellowship.

When every funeral ceremony was performed to the memory of Le Devot, De Barre, in a very strong and definitive manner, signified his desire to Veronica, that she should prepare to obey the last will of her husband : against this step she made a violent struggle, and exerted every possible evasion to counteract a command which had no other view but to plunge her into future oblivion, and bury her within the walls of monastic superstition. The chevalier, however, was determined, and the ambitious, unwilling Veronica, was obliged to obey.

De Barre, on the other hand, signified his intention to Lodowick, that he would then, as he had heretofore done, support the honour of his father's house and castle ; but, observed at the same time, that, for his part, he wished to live retired in his own, with the association only of his son, Henry De Poitiers, and his ancient domestics.

Misfortune, when she once appears, seldom vanishes on a sudden. A few days after the funeral of Le Devot, the castle of De Barre was alarmed by a violent knocking at the outward gate : the porter obeyed the summons ; and, seeing two strangers, demanded the nature of their visit at so late an hour ! Receiving thereupon a brief answer that they were friends, the fellow admitted them as far as the hall. De Barre and De Poitiers, having heard the sonorous peal at the gate, rose at the sound, and soon discovered the strangers, who were both clad in deep mourning : the elder of the two, when he perceived the chevalier advance, ran to meet him with every possible eagerness, and, like lightning, flew into his arms. De Barre, thus suddenly attacked, and overwhelmed as he was with astonishment, found his bosom, nevertheless, animated with all the glow of fervid friendship : when the stranger, therefore, with drew his hand from the sacred repository, in which, for some moments it had been concealed, the chevalier looked attentively on the countenance, and, in an instant, recognized the features of his ancient friend and brother-soldier, the gallant Marquis St. Amand. As De Barre had been hitherto, from surprise and ignorance, backward in paying the tributary reciprocation, he now recompensed for his neglect, in a two-fold embrace.

The first transports of joy and surprise being past, the chevalier and De Poitiers conducted the Marquis and his

friend to an apartment in the castle. When De Barre congratulated himself on the honour St. Amand and his companion had done him by their visit, the Marquis, with a sigh, replied : " Ah ! my worthy chevalier, to you we are much beholden : to your castle we shall be beholden also, as it must, for some time, be our refuge and our prison." De Barre, surprised and agitated, was going to question further. St. Amand, however, interrupted his design, observing, in consequence thereof, that on the morrow he should know all ; and, in return, should tell all he knew.

Mutual curiosity being thus reciprocally adjourned till the following day, a repast was soon provided for the Marquis and his friend. Having fed very heartily, and afterwards spent a few hours in friendly converse, they, with the whole castle, retired to slumber.

There was one, however, who retired not for slumber only, but to enjoy the alternate sweets and bitterness of reflection. Henry De Poitiers, whose soul had been agitated of late, with troubles, distresses, and anxieties that it never before had experienced, opened a field, of which contemplation made a most extensive circuit.

A few days back, (so far had fancy and hypocrisy deceived him,) he enjoyed the maternal esteem and converse of Veronica, the friendly society and mutual intercourse of Lodowick : the one was now secluded in the melancholy confines of a monastery, a prey to remorse and repentance ; the other, a wretched exile as it were, immured within the solitary walls of a castle ; no friend to whom he could discover his thoughts or his miseries. Having so basely proved himself unworthy of friendship's sweet alleviating converse : no wife, no sister to console his miseries : no kinsman to ameliorate the rough edge of his sun-staring crimes ; and no domestic to pity his misfortunes : misfortunes engendered by ambition, and originating from an unprincipled idea of a false and futile grandeur : a wanderer, in fact, over a deserted castle, stained with the blood of a father ; and a miserable object of solitude and reflection. Le Devot, on the other hand, the generous, the sacrificed Le Devot, to have fallen so suddenly the fatal victim of the unhappy being to whom he had given breath,—existence : it was an idea so horrible, so scaring, that it struck the mind of Henry with a terror inexplicable. Hatred for the parricide, he could not cherish : the smallest ember of which he assiduously banished from his thoughts, having

forgiven the offender, (as he had done,) in the last dying moments of the innocent, the injured, and the heroic sufferer : this, however, was not all, one thing more disturbed the repose of De Poitiers : the friends of his father were equally his, always a partaker of their happiness or their sorrows : the Marquis St. Amand, therefore, the dear companion of the chevalier, a soldier of the first renown, a man of potent rank, of high regard, and noblest birth ; that he should seek for shelter in the castle as a prisoner, bearing, at the same time, in his external appearance, the dark and gloomy sorrows of his soul : such a melancholy concatenation of woes, mischance, and misadventures, shook the steady soul of Henry, overwhelmed him with grief and commiseration, gave that awful turn of imagination which made his honest nature weep, and immersed his fertile, tender fancy in a train of misery and distress, nearly tantamount to what the unhappy and the guilty felt themselves.

CHAPTER IX.

In the morning, when De Barre and De Poitiers, with their guests, had concluded their matin repast, the former requested his son that he would take the friend of St. Amand (Dagobert, for so was he named,) to circuit the castle, as he was wont himself to do soon after he had risen.

Henry obeyed this requisition of his father's with pleasure and alacrity ; for his assiduity he was very soon recompensed, as he shortly discovered in Dagobert, a man whose manners and conversation portrayed him in the light, not only as a gentleman, but one likely to become an inmate and a friend.

In the meantime, De Barre made the Marquis acquainted with the whole series of his life, since last they saw each other, including the melancholy dissolution of his unfortunate kinsman, Le Devot, and the warmest eulogies on the virtues of Henry, his son : this last circumstance, as the chevalier expressed himself, was what he wished to have kept a secret from all the world, the Marquis excepted ; and for that purpose only, had requested De Poitiers to conduct his friend Dagobert about the castle, till such time as he had made a conclusion of his tale.

Henry and his new companion returning soon afterwards, the Marquis, at the earnest intreaties of every one, made the succeeding recital of his adventures.

CHAPTER X.

"NOTHING particular happened, my worthy friend," said the Marquis, "either to me or my kindred, for some time after the last campaign that we served together in the wars against England; which interval I shall of course pass over, as nothing occurred in the least interesting. Returning home, however, subsequent to that, from a journey that I had made through different parts of Normandy, I perceived, one day, some peasants dancing and making merry in an open field: I halted awhile, to view their rustic sports; and halting, I quickly lost my heart: among the fairest of the peasantry I discovered one, who moved through the winding mazes of the dance more like a superior being than a rusticated mortal: unable, therefore, to restrain the impatient curiosity I felt of exchanging some soft converse with her, I leaped from my horse, and approaching an old man who sat playing on the pipe at his cottage-door, I introduced myself to him when the dance was done, by approving the happiness, conviviality and good-fellowship that so apparently subsisted between the honest people who were amusing themselves thus innocently before his habitation. The aged cottager smiling content and complacency at what I had said, would have risen to give me his seat; but I restrained his hospitable ardour, and stood by his side. Another dance soon after followed, and I became more and more captivated every moment as I looked on. The beautiful Sabina, (for that was the fair stranger's name, that had struck me so forcibly with her charms,) moved upon the verdant lawn more gracefully than ever could the queen of loves: to be brief, my friend, I found my heart was lost beyond redemption: irretrievably enslaved with the beauties of an unknown rustic maid: the peasants and their ladies, after a few more exertions of their innocent pastime, thronged into the old man's cottage, to partake of a homely repast: his daughter being that day married to an honest youth, called Romane, and the entertainments that he had given to his friends and neighbours, were tokens of his content and happiness: the father having invited me to enter his humble dwelling, I accepted the offer, as you may well conceive, with every alacrity and cheerfulness: being afterwards entreated to mingle in the repast, I had the happiness and good fortune to sit at

the old man's table, with Romane, his wife, and Sabina, who was a favourite with every one, and everywhere, as I soon understood, more for her virtues and gentle deeds than her wondrous beauties and personal attractions. The repast being concluded, and the reverend host sounding his pipe for another muster to the spot of conviviality, I entreated the peasants that they would suffer me to mingle in the dance, and entreating, importuned for Sabina's hand : all my requisitions being granted as soon as they were petitioned for, I revelled in all those secret, rapturous joys that I had never tasted till that time. Finding the day, however, on the wane, I prepared to depart ; and after taking a grateful leave of the poor honest rustics, and bidding the son, his sire and wife, with the beauteous Sabina, a tender farewell, I prosecuted my route, though, not without being first earnestly and unanimously invited to return and pay them a second visit ; an importunity which, you may suppose, I did not fail of accepting with gratitude ; and, at the same time, with a full determination of putting it very early in execution.

CHAPTER XI.

" WHEN I returned to my father's house, I soon discovered that vacant insipidity, that torpid species of inanity and insensibility,* overwhelm me altogether, which I could attribute only to the circumstances of my late adventure. The melancholy change of my behaviour, the doleful manner of my deportment, and the thorough *ennui* of my whole appearance and conversation, alarmed all my friends, and made them anxious to learn the cause of so strange and so sudden an alteration : their curiosity, however, I artfully evaded ; but finding at length their researches growing more diligent, and consequently, more nauseous, I begged permission of my father to travel once more, assigning the melancholy habit of body that I laboured under as my pretext. This device, in short, proved as successful as I could wish, and the Marquis, every way anxious to behold a re-establishment of my health and cheerfulness, furnished me a second time with every convenience for my journey.

Having departed from my father's house, with more alacrity than would a spendthrift-heir return to take possession of his patrimony and hereditary honours, I bended my

way, accompanied only by my faithful domestic, Eusebius, to the cottage, where I soon had the happiness of reviewing the beloved and beautiful Sabina. Insinuating to my young host, a few hours after my arrival, that I should prefer spending the greater part of my days in the country than the city, he informed me that there was a house, not half a league from the river Seine, which was at present vacant, by the death of its late possessor : in the very same moment I grasped an opportunity, so favourable for the accomplishment of my amorous purposes, and desired him to purchase the house for me immediately. This commission being executed with every despatch, I found myself on the morrow, comfortably situated in a neat, pleasant, rustic habitation. So far settled, I disclosed my whole plan to my domestic, enjoining him, at the same time, to a secrecy inviolable ; a virtue, however, for which I knew him to be as rigid as I could possibly wish : to avoid subjecting myself, on the other hand, to any discovery on the part of my friends, and likewise to accomplish my purpose with more security, I changed my name to that of Goderville.

“ As I always entertained the most honourable intentions towards Sabina, I made proposals of marriage to her through the channel of Romane. When I opened my design to him, he was overwhelmed with astonishment : a sensation originating, as I suppose, from discovering the superiority of my habiliments, and professing, perhaps, a greater refinement of manners than he, poor fellow, had been accustomed to meet with. Conscious, however, as I might be, of the disproportion in point of birth, between Sabina and me, and confident, as I was, that the discovery of such a dissimilar union would for ever lose me the friendship of my father ; still, notwithstanding all these scarecrow apprehensions, I preferred running every risk, rather than attempt to seduce the person, or attempt to debauch the mind of a woman, as amiable and virtuous as she was complacent and beautiful. I knew full well I could depend on the secrecy of my servant, and as that was a doctrine I never failed in myself, I did not foresee anything that I had to fear. To be brief, I discovered in return from the peasant, that Sabina loved me tenderly, as I did her ; and, in a few days after the mutual disclosure, we were united in the most sacred and indissoluble ties.

CHAPTER XII.

"A FEW months subsequent to this clandestine marriage, my father died, and, being the heir to his fortune and title, I had then nothing to apprehend from the fury of parental authority or ambition. The pride, however, that I still retained, notwithstanding all the sacrifices that I had made to it, and the honour of ancestry, withheld me from disclosing the circumstances of this event: to prevent, nevertheless, the cloak from being thrown too open, I occasionally visited Rouen, though by far the greater part of my time was devoted to Sabina and the country. In this manner, my friends, I have spent nearly the last twenty years of my life, in which period my wife brought me two children,—a son and a daughter: their education I partly undertook myself, and partly entrusted to the care of my faithful servant. When my boy, Harold, had attained his twenty-first year, my design was to make him acquainted with my birth, my title and fortune, as I happily discovered, that though trained up in the humblest ideas of future matters, that he would one day prove an honour to nobility and his ancestry, both by his virtues, his courage, and his sentiments: one fatal event, however, in a short interval took place, which served as a perfect death-blow to all my fond hopes and wishes,—destroying my future happy illusions quick as the irresistible thunder-bolt of heaven. In all my exhortations to my son, my perpetual theme ever was to forewarn him from entertaining the least serious idea for any of the young female peasants about the country, as I had soon a secret to impart to him, which an adventure of that complexion would annihilate at once: he promised an obedience the most implicit; still, however, so cautious was I to defeat any measure of the kind, and so vigilant was my servant likewise, that we never suffered him to wander any way from home, without one or the other accompanying him in his excursions. One cottage he visited only, which was that of the peasant, Romane; and his family consisted alone of a female rustic, called Elwina: (the old man, his father-in-law, and his wife, whom I spoke of at first, being dead for some time back:) ignoble, however, and unknown as this peasant was, she possessed the most irresistible beauties, and manners the most interesting: such charms, in short, which youthful inclination always finds itself inca-

pable of withstanding *sans* emotion. This I perceived, and, conscious as I was of my own former frail instability to oppose the force of beauty, I perpetually forewarned Romane from ever suffering the girl to appear in the presence of my son : he promised as faithfully on his part, and I had every reason to rely on his fidelity. Love, however, has a thousand ways and means to deceive the most penetrating eye, and elude the vigilance of the most rigid watchfulness. Though Elwina was excluded from the confines of the threshold, her futile curiosity led her to pry through the lattice—the fact was, she loved my son, and he loved her : thus, mutually enamoured, as they were, the precipitate pair found a fatal opportunity when I had made a journey to Rouen, and as my servant, unfortunately, lay confined to his bed through a slight indisposition, in my absence, they, in a few hours, effected what we had so long taken pains to counteract. In this measure, they were assisted both by Sabina and Justine, who, being alike ignorant of my future designs, and seizing the opportunity of Romane's being abroad, eagerly joined to accomplish this unhappy union. When I returned, therefore, to my rustic mansion, which I had so long regarded as the dear asylum of all my worldly happiness, Eusebius met me with tears in his eyes, and told me, in a very few words, the melancholy adventure that had taken place in my absence. I was so enraged at the bare sounds which I had heard, that, in the paroxysm of anger I struck the honest fellow at my feet ; then, falling on my knees, made a most solemn vow to heaven, never to forgive either my wife or children for their fatal disobedience : then, entering the apartment where they stood trembling to receive me, I threw the key of my cabinet on the table, telling Sabina, at the same time, that it contained three hundred crowns, a sum that for the future she should receive yearly, but that neither she, nor her children, would ever see me again. At this declaration, they all threw themselves at my feet, and with tears and entreaties pressed me to stay, and change my fatal resolution. Their persuasions—their lamentations were all in vain ; I was inflexible—nothing could soften my determination—nothing could extinguish the violence of my rage : then, darting a look of the most implacable fury on my son and his rustic wife, I tore myself away, and ordering my servant to follow, I immediately set off on my return to the city.

CHAPTER XIII.

"THUS, in one unhappy hour were all my future projects overturned : all my fond hopes of happiness dashed at once in the bitter vessel of disappointment. My wife—my Sabina—my children, all—all that I doated on to distraction, lost to me for ever, by their rashness and disobedience. My boy, (oh, dire mishap!) who would have proved an honourable lustre to his father's name and title—whose virtues and whose sentiments would have formed the noblest badges of his distinction ; and thus to have plunged himself for ever in oblivion, in the arms of an ignoble peasant, unknown to all the world !—Oh ! full of anguish is the reflection ; and deeply abounding with misery and distraction !

"Perhaps, you contemplate, my friends, why I should obliterate all those I held once so dear, for having sinned, only as I had sinned before ? The frailty of human nature, however, at all times is great ; and age, when assisted by experience, spurns at that which it formerly looked upon with impunity and indifference. The present circumstances, moreover, contrasted with the others, admit of far less extenuation : *my* father knew not of my union with Sabina—the secret went down with him to the grave : I, however, ever forewarned my son from stumbling against the rash step he did—am still living, and miserably conscious of his dishonour and disobedience.

"The sorrow that I felt upon the above melancholy adventure seized hold of my spirits with the most inveterate rancour ; and never did I experience a happy moment since my separation from Sabina : this series of sadness was embittered, moreover, by the teasing importunities of my friends, who, when they found that I had dropped my rambling pursuits, were for ever whispering in my ear the necessity of perpetuating the name of my ancestry, and marrying in the family of some noble house, equal in honour to my own ; for my secret reason, I long turned a deaf ear to their persuasions and remonstrances, growing, in the meantime, the most visible sacrifice to all the torments of anguish and despair. To be brief, however, having so incessantly my riches, my title and pretensions represented to my imagination in the most glaring descriptions, I acquiesced at length to the counsel of my friends, who immediately, with my approbation, made an overture of marriage

for me, to the daughter of the Duke O——. This proposal was cheerfully accepted of, and the day of our union was soon after fixed upon, and publicly declared. On the eve, however, of this extorted match, the reflection of the hapless Sabina came athwart my mind, and the ideal presence of my children started the most cruel fancies—they all appeared to me at this period, more beautiful, more virtuous and more solicitous for my happiness, than they ever had done before : even Elwina excited my commiseration, and, with her beauty and innocence, cancelled her precipitancy and ignoble pretensions. By an alliance with the duke's daughter, an entire obliteration of the past, I saw, must inevitably ensue :—that my Sabina, my children, and all, must henceforward appear as nonentities—things of a mere shadowy existence—never to be thought of more. The terrible reflection overwhelmed me with every horror, and made me shake with distraction and remorse : the bitter representations of my fancy, excruciating as they proved, were not the moiety, however, of what crowded on my imagination : my nature—my religion—everything informed me that Sabina was my wife—my wife, in the most sacred countenance of heaven, and of man—How, then, was I about to act ? Marry another ! For why ? For what ? The cause ? Was it to be revenged on the innocent woman who had been the partner of my bosom for twenty years ! On the offspring who had been the dear pledges of our mutual endearments ! Oh, God ! No. To be revenged rather on myself—to be my own destroyer—to be the actual self-origin of all my future miseries, despair, anguish and remorse.

CHAPTER XIV.

“OVERWHELMED with these terrible reflections and tormenting apprehensions, I flew for relief to my dear friend, Dagobert, and shortly disclosed to him the vast heap of sorrows under which I felt myself oppressed. I beseeched him to be as quick and brief in his counsel, as the exigency of the case required. Dagobert was truly so, for he hesitated not a moment in dissuading me to resign all thoughts of an union with the duke's daughter. Honour ! Heaven ! Affection ! Nature ! and every tie, human and divine, (he said,)

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strongly forbade it. This friendly admonition was sufficient, and I obeyed the veto of my counsellor. The next thing to be considered was, how to countermand the nuptials which were to take place early on the morrow. Dagobert fully perceived the dangers that threatened such an event, and justly reproached me for my want of confidence. He undertook the embassy, notwithstanding, and hastened to disclose my contradictory sentiments to the duke, leaving me behind, a prey to every anguish and remorse. The dial, however, had not gone its hourly circuit before my friend returned ; and, with infinite anger in his countenance, informed me that I must accompany him a short distance from the city, to satisfy the proud menaces of the duke, who had treated both him and his message with the most insufferable insolence and scorn. On hearing these words, the late paroxysm of despair that I had experienced was changed into the most violent ebullition of rage ; and when I should otherwise have encountered the duke with unwillingness, knowing myself to be the aggressor, the affront that he had broached on my friend excited my utmost anger and indignation. Eager to obey the proud summons, I flew with Dagobert to the place of rendezvous, and found the duke already there, attended by the Marquis d'A——. The moment he saw me advance, he drew upon me without deigning to enter into the least expostulation. My friend, finding that his pride and anger were too much raised for us to expect the least parley, commanded me to keep an equal taciturnity, and receive his attack. All this I strictly conformed to, and the duke making a furious hit at my bosom, I skilfully parried the thrust, and wounded him in the arm. This served to inflame his anger to a degree that knew no bounds, and, furiously rushing onward to revenge his wound, he received my weapon through and through his heart. The Marquis d'A—— perceiving his friend dead, beyond any hopes of recovery, generously warned us to fly till some re-union and pacific measure could be brought about. This counsel we immediately took ; and, mounting our horses, rode swiftly to your castle, which I knew to be the safest asylum we could possibly fix upon."

The Marquis St. Amand having thus concluded his history, which, it was easy to remark, had given him the most palpable pain and uneasiness in the recital, the chevalier and De Poitiers, to divert his attention and remove his melancholy, conducted him over the different apart-

ments of the castle ; which could boast of exciting the curiosity of the first lover of antiquity. This being done, De Barre shewed his old friend and Dagobert their destined apartments, both of which enjoyed the most luxuriant prospects of the country, and looked directly on the banks of the river Seine.

CHAPTER XV.

THE lively association and friendly converse of the Marquis and Dagobert, at the castle of De Barre, infinitely relieved that sorrow and inanity which the death of Le Devot, together with the expulsion of Veronica and the absence of her son, would certainly have occasioned. De Poitiers, however, forgetting the design that Lodowick had meditated against his life, lamented his solitude, and, at times, clandestinely visited him at his melancholy abode. Nothing on the other hand was wanting to perfect the happiness of St. Amand in his asylum, than the presence of Sabina and his children—a step which De Barre took every opportunity to forward and bring about. Fifteen months had elapsed since the marquis had been absent from his family, and some share of inquietude took hold of him, from the consciousness of his having neglected to remit Sabina the three hundred crowns which he had promised her annually, a neglect owing to his prudent retirement in De Barre's castle ; but where he was soon determined to violate and fulfil his former promise in person : it was too true that he had sworn never to see her more ; but repentance, he hoped, would cancel that vow of precipitate rashness, the disobeying of which appeared rather a virtue than a sin ; a measure wherewithal that could not be attended with much danger on the score of the duke's death, as the journey to his country dwelling was scarcely six leagues from the castle of De Barre, and the way thither lying entirely along the banks of the Seine.

In these moments, however, villany of a most horrid aspect was snorting through every adjacent part of the country, to seek the destruction of innocence, beauty, virtue, courage, and every noble attribute of possible human excellence.

Lodowick, in the few visits that he had received from the generous sensibility of De Poitiers, (visits, in fact, made

unknown to De Barre, who had now entertained the most inveterate antipathy for his kinsman,) appeared always clothed in the mantle of penitence, melancholy, and despair. The humane spirit of the noble bastard, being itself unconscious of dissimulation, easily fell into the pit laid open to catch his sympathy and sorrow : so far did the dissimulation of Lodowick extend, that De Poitiers thoroughly believed him a convert to virtue and repentance, when, in reality, he was forming an abyss of the most horrid iniquity.

The villain, heir of Le Devot, being abandoned by his kinsman De Barre, and left the sole resident of a solitary castle, made distant excursions into several parts of the country ; not solely, however, with the view of diverting his time and lassitude, but to seek for some adventure, which carried with it the countenance of an hardy enterprize.

The wishes of villany generally meet with a speedier success than those of anxious or despairing virtue, being, as it is, more predominant and disseminated. Lodowick, as an instance thereof, no sooner hoped for an opportunity to display his iniquity than he fell into the way of it. Riding alone, some few leagues from his castle, along the margin of the river, he met with a beautiful female peasant, who had an appearance, however, infinitely superior to the lowness of rusticity : she was sitting on the banks of the Seine, in the most pensive attitude, deeply absorbed in thought : then, afterwards raising her eyes to heaven, she exclaimed : "*Unhappy Elwina!*" Lodowick, on dismounting, fastened his horse to a tree at a small distance, and approached the fair stranger : she startled, and screamed, —he caught her by the hand, or the rustic would have fled. Lodowick thereupon stopped, and questioned her whither she was flying ? "To my family and my friends," replied she, with considerable agitation. "And do they dwell, fair maid, far distant from this place ? Ah ! happy family ! happiest friends !" continued the insinuating villain, interrupting the stranger, at the same time, in her answer : "wherever they dwell, it must be the abode of beauty, innocence, and virtue—of peace and tranquillity. Ah ! thou most invaluable blessing of virtue, known only beneath the roof of contented rusticity—sweet inmate of simplicity,—the sole beacon to the way-worn steps of chilling poverty, and welcome emblem of unfeigned hospitality."

The fair stranger, struck both with the beauty of Lodowick's person, and more so with the apparent honest simplicity of his expressions, felt an emotion of tender prepossession which she could in no wise account for. He easily discovering her surprise and embarrassment, continued canting forth his straggling sentiments of extorted piety, till they had reached a small cottage, at the door of which was sitting a peasant somewhat advanced in life, and with him, another female of equal distinguishable dignity as the *unhappy Elwina*.

CHAPTER XVI.

ON the approach of Elwina to the cottage door, Romane and Justine, (the very friend and daughter of Goderville,) rose from their seats to receive Lodowick. Though they accosted him both cheerfully and hospitably, there appeared a timidity and backwardness in Romane to suffer his progress further than the bare threshold. A mutual intimacy was what Lodowick most anxiously expected, for the charms of Elwina had struck him with the most invincible desire to rush on her beauties in the most libertine extent. He panted to establish an immediate intercourse, that, like the serpent, being received at once in favour, he might, with more felicity, sting his innocent hostess. Chance, however, did more in favour for him than inclination, for, a violent tempest at that time coming on, Romane was obliged to offer him his cottage as a shelter. Again and again did he bless this tempest, as it not only opened a channel for establishing a reciprocal intimacy, but appeared as a favourable omen to the completion of his wishes, being, like his intent, dark and tumultuous. Lodowick, however, on passing the threshold, was staggered at the sight of a man sitting by the fireside, leaning with one arm on his knee, and so much overwhelmed in thought, as not to perceive him enter. Elwina discovering him thus immersed in contemplation, approached him first, and shaking him by the shoulder tenderly, said: "Harold, my dear husband, here is a stranger who has sought for shelter in our cottage from this dreadful storm." The youth, on hearing this immediately started from his reverie, and approaching Lodowick with the most noble courtesy, bade him kindly welcome. The latter, at the sight of this unexpected per-

son, felt himself overwhelmed with the most inexpressible surprise and confusion ; of such sort, in fact, as is experienced by guilt and vice, when they find themselves opposed to the contrasted retrospect of conscious virtue and innocence.

Harold, though evidently depressed with care and sorrow, (for death, as hereafter may be more fully told, had robbed him of Sabina, his dearly-beloved mother : and misfortunes, leagued with poverty, had driven him, with his wife and sister, to seek for shelter in the humble cottage of Romane,) exhibited a person not in the smallest degree deficient of what Lodowick himself possessed, joined with an air of complacency and encouragement, that astonished the wondering spectator. To behold, beneath so mean a roof, such beauty, dignity, and such nobleness of deportment, damped at first the adventurous designs of Lodowick, leaving him, at the same time, absorbed in an abyss of wonder, and panting with eagerness, for an opportunity to have the greatness of his curiosity satisfied by some means or other : whilst, on the other hand, to discover that Elwina was the wife of Harold, served in a very great extent to depress, for the moment, his iniquitous purpose.

These reflective oppositions, however, were but transient and superficial ; for, to a callous and daring spirit, like that which Lodowick possessed, dangers and obstacles, the more numerous they are, appear more worthy of the enterprise, and nobler to overcome.

Lodowick, having thus gained his first point of being made acquainted with the person, and acquiring, in some degree, the good opinion of the cottagers, through the favourable introduction of Elwina, he did not despair of gaining his ultimate wish. The tempest being over, Harold rose from his seat, and told his guest that now, as it was fair, he would, according to his daily custom, go in quest of some game with which the country abounded, and which, in fact, being their chief subsistence, was the only reason, owing to their present deficiency of that article, that they had not asked him to partake of some refreshment. To this, however, Lodowick objected, and, rising at the same time, intreated Harold to accompany him to his horse, as he must depart homewards, having some few leagues to travel ; then, taking leave of the cottagers, he departed in company with his young host from the cottage.

After some moments of silence, Lodowick, with every

apparent ingenuousness and possible artfulness, observed to Harold, that it was very easy to be remarked, on the slightest glimpse, that his mind was surcharged with some secret sorrow—that fortune had dealt unkindly with him, his wife and his friends—that the unguarded expression which had escaped Elwina, on the banks of the Seine, was a sufficient testimonial of some unknown misfortune, and withal, that their persons, their discourse, their manners, so superior as they were to a cottage residence, demonstrated how fully they merited a more noble destiny. Short and fatuitous therefore, (continued Lodowick,) as our interview has proved, I sincerely feel for your hidden sorrows—feel for those wounds which the shafts of adversity have showered upon you, and feeling, as I do, the most sensible gratification that I am enabled, in some measure, to render them supportable. Here Lodowick paused for a short time, to hear if Harold would make any reply ; but, being disappointed in this, he thus concluded his deceitful professions. “My duty—my sympathy, and my religion, have ever taught me to alleviate the sorrows of adversity, and ameliorate the distresses of my fellow-creatures. What I have, therefore, the unfortunate and the virtuous are ever welcome to become partakers of. Thus anxious to participate the bounties of heaven, in gratitude to the being that sent them me, I hope, most worthy stranger, that your spirit will not feel itself injured by what I now dare to offer.” On this, Lodowick pressed the acceptance of his purse ; but Harold, with a dignity that would be admired by any other but this artful hypocrite, refused the offered liberality : “Whether or no,” replied the cottager, “that I am overwhelmed with poverty or ill-fortune, as I may or may not be, I have that remaining which can well support the wants of our humble dwelling. To your generosity I shall ever be a debtor : the intent with me is equal to the deed : to me, however, you are the stranger of an hour—you know me not—why thus liberal, therefore, to one who, perhaps, might deceive you—might, perhaps, prove unworthy of your generosity ? When you journey this way again, my cottage will be always honoured by your presence : in time, therefore, you may be informed of my virtues or my vices, and then, when I want, I shall not be backward in asking.”

At the conclusion of Harold's answer, (which was directed with every prudence and caution, as not willing to

intrust his secrets to a stranger, and at the same time to accept a proffer, for why, and from whom he knew not,) they arrived at the tree to which the horse had been fastened. Lodowick, thereupon, bade the cottager an apparent tender adieu, though, at the same period, he was both disappointed and surprised with the little information he had gained, and at the ambiguous refusal his pecuniary offer had experienced.

CHAPTER XVII.

WHEN Harold returned to his cottage, Elwina and Justine were anxious to learn what the stranger had said to him in his absence. Having recapitulated, thereupon, every word that had reciprocally passed, and concluding with his refusal of the purse, Romane immediately lifted up his hands to heaven, and returned the most ardent thanks to his divine Creator for having dictated so disinterested and fortunate self-denial. Harold, surprised at the anxious fervency with which this extraordinary thanksgiving was uttered, instantly demanded the cause! Romane, to this interrogatory very readily answered, that when the stranger was approaching towards the cottage with Elwina, it struck him in the most forcible manner that he had frequently seen the same person before: looking upon him, therefore, with more steadfastness the further he advanced, I recollected him (continued Romane) to be Lodowick, the present lord of Le Devot's castle, and who, not long since, killed his father in the forest. Having frequently accompanied baggages of corn and provisions from this part of the country to the castle, I had opportunities of seeing both him and my lady Veronica, who now is gone, no one knows where. The Chevalier De Barre, a noble knight and kinsman to the Le Devots, endeavoured to keep the murder of the sire a secret from the neighbouring country; but in vain, for crimes, my children, of so black a nature, the tongues of honesty and religion disdain to hide.

Harold, at the sound of this atrocious discovery, could scarcely believe his senses: the sentiments of morality and friendship that he had heard from Lodowick, little suited with the horrid loads of guilt and parricide: to him he had appeared a saint—an angel despatched by the benignity of Providence to relieve his sorrows. Romane, however,

strongly persisting in what he had advanced, and corroborating his tale with still stronger proofs, Harold yielded to conviction, and began sincerely to lament his having given Lodowick such a general invitation to his cottage.

Romane and Justine, when they heard this lamentation of Harold, regretted the cause with equal poignancy. Elwina, however, whose bosom flowed, perhaps, with a greater share of sympathy and sorrow, both for the misfortunes and crimes of her fellow-beings, observed, that Romane might possibly have been imposed upon by the craft of falsehood : that the censure of the world ought not always to be regarded without it was strengthened by the most unerring demonstration : that the illiberality of mankind was as partial as it was universal, and that there was something of an intuitive nature which taught her to believe, that Lodowick had more claim upon their attention than they were aware of. This opinion, however, of Elwina's was attributed only to the softness of her nature, and it was determined by the others, that whenever the *murderer of his father* made his appearance at the cottage, that he should be received with coldness and inattention.

Lodowick, on his return to the solitariness of the castle, felt himself overwhelmed with all the horrors that must attend an exclusion from his kindred and the world : his soul was inflamed with the eagerness it felt for the possession of Elwina : his desires were uncontrollable, and his resolution was fixed to gratify them, let the consequence be death, or the most terrible event. These, however, were the smallest miseries under which he groaned. Even more and more was he disappointed, harrassed and nettled to the quick. He now, on his second visit, found himself neglected and treated with the most marked indifference at the cottage. The contempt with which he was received, and beneath so mean a roof, was insupportable, and made his proud spirit meditate the most insatiable revenge. One ray of hope, and one only, shot across his heart, which made him endure these unpardonable tortures with some small degree of patience and fortitude. Elwina met him in the cottage with a countenance less inflexible than her companions—in her looks there appeared some glances of pity and complacency. Indifference she assiduously avoided, and regarded the neglect of her friends with visible emotion and anguish. Such favourable augurs, therefore, as these, Lodowick interpreted into success, and was determined, after the

lapse of a monthly devotion at the cottage, to effect that by the force of stratagem, which he found to be ineffectually attempted by any other means.

CHAPTER XVIII.

De Poitiers having paid some visits (as it was hitherto observed) to Lodowick, on the unfortunate death of his father, to console him for the unhappy event, and to relax his moments of solitude and anxiety, was now much surprised to find him always absent from the castle, and his domestics never able to give him the least information whither he had gone, or when he should return. This strange adventure gave rise to several conjectures of fatal apprehension, for De Poitiers, notwithstanding all the pity he had experienced for the sufferings of Lodowick, had still the death of Le Devot in his remembrance ; and the man, he well conceived, who could level his arrow at the breast of his friend, and afterwards cancel his thoughts and secrets from that same friend, after the most sacred promise of an inviolable confidence, could be still further capable of additional crimes.

De Poitiers, from the above reflections, had determined to watch the peregrinations of Lodowick, and discover whether his designs were virtuous or iniquitous. If he found them to bear the former stamp, he intended that his researches should cease ; but, if on the contrary, nobly to rescue the object who was fixed upon as the sacrifice of his villany.

In this laudable measure, however, he was obstructed by the Marquis St. Amand, who, anxious to learn how the friends of the duke stood towards a reconciliation, requested De Poitiers to undertake an embassy to his faithful servant Eusebius, who would give him every information on the subject : for these exertions in his behalf, the marquis importuned the chevalier to suffer Henry to accept of the commission, which he had obtained originally for his kinsman. This offer, however, was gratefully refused ; for De Barre never could bear an idea of separation from his beloved boy, till death itself interfered : he, nevertheless, beseeched the marquis to reserve it for his own son, as a reward for the sufferings he must have experienced on the loss of so noble a sire. To this, St. Amand assented on one condition, that the chevalier should accompany him in a

months hence, to be a witness of the happy reconciliation between Sabina, his children, and himself.

Lodowick, finding all his views levelled to the ground by the inflexible treatment he met with at the cottage, and for why and wherefore he could not possibly divine, (unsuspicious as he was of Romane's discovery,) began now to find resource in more effectual and more horrible means. In his journey to and fro, he had ever accustomed himself to halt at a small inn, which lay about half way on the road from the castle to the cottage.

The host of this inn was a man in whose face the strongest marks of villany were deeply imprinted. A fellow that was perpetually discontented and grumbling at the partiality of fortune, which suffered him, as he petulantly remarked, to live so ignobly, whilst fools rose to riches and preferments. One that was suspected by the neighbouring people, and on the most sufficient reason, to make away clandestinely with their corn and cattle—to abuse and trample on those beneath him, and, in short, to play the tyrant and knave, whenever opportunity could favour his atrocious designs.

Lodowick, whose interesting person, insinuating manners, and close dissimulation, were able to deceive the wisest and the most honest, could not fail of striking the attention of the villain Dominick—for Dominick was he called. This fellow, Lodowick saw he could form to his own designs—make him an implement to accomplish all his intentions, and, by bribery, plunge him into a deeper abyss of iniquity than the one in which he already wallowed.

The more effectually to sound the depth of Dominick's villany, Lodowick first gained his affections by treating him with familiarity. Hearing him at all times complain of his poverty, he joined in reproaches against the partial dispensations of fortune, and what was more efficacious than these invectives, he twice presented Dominick with his purse. Lodowick having proceeded so far with success, and finding that his host would proceed to any extremity to serve him, in return began himself to rail and curse the inflexibility of his persecuting stars. No sooner did he launch into this channel, than Dominick, with all the eagerness of whetted villany, embraced the same, and urged Lodowick with the utmost importunity to point him out a remedy to overcome his ill-fate, and he would endeavour to establish his repose, though he should reach the verge of dissolution in the enterprise.

Lodowick, finding the host unscrupulous as he could wish in the maxims of villany, disclosed to him his adventure at the cottage—the contempt of its residents—his burning passion for Elwina, and his fixed resolution of enjoying her at every hazard : that he had already formed a design in his mind of effecting his purpose ; but which, however, he could not have done, unless he had been so fortunate as to have found so brave and noble an accomplice, as he had done in his worthy and disinterested host. Dominick swallowed this potion of flattery with so much avidity, that in his ecstasy of gladness he grasped fast hold of Lodowick's hand ; then gaping, with a mouth full of venomous destruction, and leaning his body across the table, prepared himself to listen with the most anxious attention to what his young host had to disclose.

“Dominick, my brave and honest friend,” said Lodowick, “it is thus I propose that we shall effect our purpose. In the dead of night, about four days onward, we will journey to the cottage ; as it will be impossible, however, to obtain Elwina but by dint of stratagem, I design to fire a heap of hay which stands near the dwelling, the conflagration of which will soon spread to every adjacent part : the cottage being so very small, it will be easy for those within to escape from the flames, and as easy, I hope, to carry off Elwina in the confusion that will prevail. This stratagem, however, will meet with but a moiety of success, unless we can establish an opinion that she perished in the conflagration ; in that case, I shall be enabled to enjoy her in secrecy at my castle, without encountering any further perplexities from her husband and kindred, thinking, as they must, that the unhappy Elwina fell with their hospitable dwelling. To bring this about, therefore, my honest Dominick, you shall go, on the night previous to our grand design, to the church which stands hard by the cottage, and remove some dead body from its grave—if possible, see that it be a female one. On that, carry the corpse to the cottage, and conceal it beneath the hay, which, being consumed on the next night, will contribute to the idea that Elwina perished in the flames. The men are two only—Harold, the husband, and an old man, his father. Provide yourself, therefore, with a club, and as they attempt to make their passage through the cottage-door, fell them to the ground. In the meantime, I shall be on the watch to convey Elwina away to your house, which, for that night, must be her prison ; on

the succeeding one, I will conduct her to my castle. This, Dominick, is what I have planned—the reward of your exertions shall be five hundred crowns, and my friendship as long as I live to bestow it.”

The host, having regarded Lodowick as a prodigy of excellence, (for a villain, deeds of horrible iniquity work with as much efficacy, as does the disinterested virtuous act with the spirit of charity,) in one moment entered into his whole views and designs. Everything, therefore, being planned on one side, and approved by the other, they took their farewell, for the present, of each other, with mutual promises of confidence, and a perpetual good-fellowship.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE day being arrived that Dominick should lay the groundwork of his employer's villany, he made his way on horseback under the auspices of darkness to the awful repository of the dead, bearing with him a pick-axe and lantern. Dismounting, he ascended the steps of the church-yard, and perusing the inscriptions of the several tombstones as he passed, soon discovered one, which, by its external characters, betrayed the recent interment of a young female. On this, he fixed his lantern on a small pyramidal stone that stood just at hand, and then commenced his sacrilegious labour. With his pick-axe, he soon gained the depth of the coffin, and with some difficulty raised it on the level ground. Having proceeded thus far, he broke open the hallowed encasement, and grasped the sacred remains in his arms. He was then on the point of carrying away the corpse, to lay it athwart his horse's back, when he was scared with the most inexpressible horror on hearing the sounds of an agonizing scream, and the prostration of some being, at a few steps' distance. At this, his whole frame vibrated with terror and astonishment; and after suffering the corpse to fall from his arms, he stood for some moments immoveable as the surrounding stones. Requiring, however, some resolution from the danger of his situation, he advanced towards the place from whence he had distinguished the sounds. Groping cautiously onward with his lantern, he soon discovered a woman extended on the ground, arrayed in sable garments, with a figure and appearance differing largely from the common herd. Doubt-

ful, however, whether it was some phantom that was sent to deter him from his sacrilegious purpose, or a human being who had fled to the protection of the church from some criminal deed, he placed his hand upon her heart, and discovering that it beat with uncommon velocity, he raised her upwards in his arms, and fanned her with the skirt of his cloak. After some moments had expired, the stranger began to recover, but opening her eyes, and casting them on Dominick, whose face was illumed with the gloomy shade of his lantern, and rendered thereby more horrible than nature had really formed it, she gave another scream, and concealed her face within the palms of her two hands. The villanous host, however, who feared no mortal being, had now thoroughly recovered from his apprehensions, and discovering a ring of great value on the stranger's finger, and a bracelet enriched with jewels on her arm, he began to look upon this extraordinary adventure as having happily taken place for his advantage.

Dominick being himself again, and seeing the stranger overcome with her original dismay and terror, launched into a rough vein of consolation, and assured her, with as much softness as his nature would suffer him, that she might look upon him as a friend—as one who was fortunately sent to her assistance, if she had been compelled to fly to such a dreadful abode at so dark and unseasonable an hour for any crime or dire mishap. The stranger gaining courage, from hearing such a degree of placidity proceed from a figure so uncouth, summoned a few moments of fortitude to her aid, and tremblingly answered, "That she was a wretch—an outcast—most vile and unfortunate.—That she had fled for protection to that church for the most unpardonable of crimes ; but, the night being so far advanced, she had waited for the morning to intreat its sanction and its absolution.—That, being concealed only within the porch, she had seen him approach—beheld him rifling the repository of the dead, and after suffering the most excruciating torments of fear, guilt, and horror at the sight, I was," continued she, "at last so irresistibly overcome, that I yielded to my terrors and fell insensible, as you found me, on the ground. So far extends my unhappy story ; now, therefore, let me add," continued the stranger, "that if it is in your power to protect me further than can the sanctity of these walls, I will reward you with a most unlimited hand; and, in proportion to your fidelity, pour a heap of

riches in your bosom." At this she gave him a purse laden with gold. "First, accept this small offering—mere dross, my friend, to what you shall hereafter receive, as your secrecy to my cause shall merit."

Dominick having first secured the purse in his doublet, assured the stranger that she might fully rely on his fidelity and fortitude. "As for sacred attestations," added he, "made up to heaven to confirm what I now profess, I always scorn—my future deeds shall fulfil my present sayings. By villany I exist, and was I to reveal the darkness of my doings, I should cease to live. You must now remain here for a short time, till I take that corpse to a small distance from this church-yard; and, stranger, mark me well, your security hangs not so much on your proffered generosity, as the secrecy you shall observe of what you have beheld in this place of interment." Upon this, Dominick once more took the dead body in his arms, and having placed it across his horse's back, carried it to the cottage; which, having safely deposited beneath the hay, he returned to the burial-ground. Then, assisting the stranger to mount, he made the best of his way back again to his own infamous retreat.

CHAPTER XX.

DOMINICK was a villain, both by nature and habit; and, though possessing a thorough power of secrecy, his character was undistinguished by any great portion of dissimulation: dissimulation, however, to a knave of traffic, and one of his complexion, must have proved rather a defect than otherwise; for, did he dissemble his real thoughts, villains greater and richer than himself, would not have been capable of sifting the depravity of his principles, and to have stirred him on to the perpetration of fresh iniquities.

Having conveyed the stranger safely into his house, and lodged her in a secret apartment, he brought her every nourishment and comfort that the place afforded; then, bidding her farewell, and desiring her to lock the door fast on the inside, he promised to pay her a visit in the space of two days, which was the shortest period that he then could fix upon.

About noon the next day, Lodowick arrived at the house of his host: with the looks of impatience he sought to know

the result of his last night's stratagem, which Dominick related in that kind of order as it would have actually happened, had not anything of the adventure with the female stranger taken place—every circumstance of which he effaced with such scrupulous secrecy, and with such nice exactness, as could not possibly open the least channel of information to the unsuspecting ear of Lodowick, who swallowed the tale with the most joyful avidity, and commended the diligence and activity of his host with the most lavish encomiums.

When night came on, Dominick and his guest having provided themselves with every requisite material, departed for the cottage on two of Lodowick's choice coursers, which he had sent the day before by one of his favourite domestics to the inn. It was midnight when they arrived, and finding everything as silent and serene as the most gloomy darkness could render it, they proceeded to the heap of hay under which they found the corpse, well-disposed for their purposes. On this, they set fire to the place, and beheld the flames kindle with every rapidity they could wish; upon which, Dominick situated himself with his uplifted club at the door, whilst Lodowick stood concealed in the rear. The flames from behind quickly communicating to the thatch on the cottage, the whole top formed an entire conflagration, which soon made the hapless residents conscious of their danger. Harold,—the fatal, destined Harold,—first appeared, carrying the beloved Elwina in his arms. Dominick, the instant that he stepped beyond the threshold, stunned him with his club, and felled him senseless on the ground, whilst Lodowick, catching hold of his wife, enclosed her fast in his embrace, and notwithstanding all her screams, intreaties and imprecations, conveyed her to his horse, and mounting her before him, galloped swiftly off with the wretched victim. Next, oh, horrible to recount! Romane came forth with the trembling, affrighted Justine, and received the same fate from the arm of Dominick, which Harold, but a few moments before, had experienced. The unhappy fair one seeing her protector fall, and the villain that gave the fatal blow, broke forth in the most agonizing screams, and the bitterest execrations. Dominick, perceiving that the shrieks of the women, for Elwina's were still to be heard, would alarm the adjacent people, mounted his horse and followed Lodowick, whom he found had arrived at his house a few minutes before him.

The hardy and cruel incendiaries had scarcely effected their escape, when the sad remains of the humble cottage were surrounded by all the people that lived thereabout. The shrieks of Justine were past description ; but, happily for her, a strong flood of tears came to her assistance, and relieved the agonizing horrors of her soul. The spectators, in the meantime, with a sympathizing and anxious solicitude, afforded every relief to the distressed situations of Harold and Romane, who being, however, only stunned with the club of Dominick, began very soon to revive. But, alas ! when they *did* revive, how can I represent the despair, the terror, anguish and madness that they separately experienced ? For some time afterwards, they were immersed in an immoveable state of stupidity, which vanished, nevertheless, for sensations more terrible, when they heard that Elwina could nowhere be found. Harold was convinced that she did not perish in the flames, as she was in his arms when he received a blow from an unknown hand ; and Justine corroborated this, as, after her own escape, she could distinctly hear her scream at some distance from the cottage.

Romane tracing this concatenation of circumstances in his mind, could, at last, be not otherwise persuaded, but that Elwina had been carried off by the villain Lodowick, and that he, with Harold, had been felled by some one of his incendiary accomplices. The distracted cottager, however, was doomed to experience the most pitiable revolution of doubt and despair, for, scarcely was he confirmed in his suspicions, than a dead body was discovered beneath the remains of the hay. The commiserating spectators, at this awful sight, penetrated the air with the keenest exclamations of pity for the poor sufferer, and horror for the treacherous deed—with doleful lamentations for the unhappy Elwina, and with bitter execrations against the perfidious incendiary. The corpse most fortunately, however, as it led to another discovery, was not consumed, for the hay had burnt with so much rapidity that the body was only scorched, though disfigured in such a manner as to render the features incapable of recognition. Usmar, a youthful and opulent farmer, having attended this lamentable summons of distress, and mixing with the neighbouring people to view the supposed remains of Elwina, discovered a ring on the finger of the body, which he immediately

recollected, with the most piercing horror, to have given his sister, who had been dead and interred only a few days past. This adventure, in a tenfold degree, increased the general astonishment that had all along prevailed—the fire—the abuse of the cottagers' persons—the rape of Elwina, and after all, such a strange discovery of Usmar's sister's remains, which he himself lately had seen secretly deposited in sacred ground, appeared like events most supernatural and heterogeneous. The latter adventure none could possibly account for, though Romane discovered a clue which would lead them ultimately to the knowledge of every mystery.

The poor cottager, in contemplating the melancholy ruins of his once happy dwelling, cast his eyes on a buckle and some feathers, which he immediately recollected to have seen in the hat of Lodowick, and which, in the anxiety of securing Elwina, he had suffered to fall unperceived. This fresh discovery Romane made known to all who had assembled round the cottage, which, placing Lodowick as the author of the whole night's villany and distress beyond any further doubt, the voice of pity was in an instant changed to that of revenge. Usmar, incensed beyond all description at the sacrilegious removal of his sister's manes, called both on God and man to grant him immediate vengeance; whilst Harold, equally inflamed with the bitterness of anger for the loss of his beauteous, beloved Elwina, most devoutly adjoined Amen to Usmar's prayer; on this, Amen and Amen were echoed everywhere about by the sympathizing cottagers.

The sun having yet an hour or so to irradiate the terrestrial orb, Usmar made his brother-sufferers, with Justine, accompany him to his habitation, till the morning should give them an opportunity of pursuing Lodowick and his accomplice.

CHAPTER XXI.

Lodowick having conveyed Elwina safe to the inn, led her to an apartment where everything was already prepared for her refreshment and his infernal purposes. The fair distressed, however, refused to partake of the least alleviation, and remained silent and inflexible. Her strength had been exhausted—her tender frame was shook to its very

basis in the horrid journey that she had been compelled to undergo, and she now seemed both ready and willing to experience the worst alternative—death,—for the loss of honour she was determined to prevent at the loss of life. Thus resolved, she sat patient-like ; her head reclining on her arm, both owing their feeble support to her trembling and half-uplifted knee.

Lodowick, having spent the few remaining hours of darkness in endeavouring to reconcile the hapless Elwina to her fate, but, finding all his promises, all his extorted sentiments of honour and fidelity, and all his professions of the most unbounded love prove ineffectual, he was determined no longer to dally with opportunity which afforded him so propitious an interval of gratification. Thus resolved, he fixed his seat aside the desponding, trembling Elwina, and clasping her around, forced an embrace, to which she answered with a most piercing scream. This thrilling proof of disinclination served only to summon Dominick to his post, otherwise it was heeded not. Pity was to be smothered without remorse, and hot desire to predominate alone. To the above constrained embrace, he now violated her sacred lips with the most hideous contact. The lips of villany most sacrilegious, he joined to those of virtue most untainted. To that and that, fresh trespasses against the boundaries of innocence were gradually committed, until Elwina, nearly overcome, fell upon her knees, and with her remaining strength—with uplifted hands—with eyes, darting the feeble rays of glimmering despondency, she appealed to Lodowick for pity : “ Oh ! Lodowick,” exclaimed the agonized Elwina, “ Lodowick, look not upon me with that countenance of horror and determination—plunge thy weapon in this bosom that never wished thee harm ; but spare my innocence—spare my virtue—ought else is thine—my life—Oh ! take my hapless life, which, without honour, never can be worth the holding.” At this, Elwina made bare her bosom for the well-supplanted stroke of death. Lodowick, regarding the offered spot of sacrifice, beheld ——— *The grape and the green leaf* : the terrible emblems of a *recovered sister*, lost from the time of infancy—the dying mementos of a *murdered father*.

Lodowick, undaunted villain as he was, now shrunk back with the great load of horror, guilt and astonishment. The terror of his looks—the fearful glances of his penetrating eye, soon overcame the already surcharged Elwina. Death

was now making rapid strides to finish all her sorrows, and sinking insensible on the floor, her head reclined against the wainscot: memory, for a time, took a transient flight, and clouded all the assembled horrors of her mind in a mist of oblivion.

Lodowick, in the meantime, had scarcely recovered from his terror and amazement, when his soul received a fresh shock from a loud clamour that he distinguished in the gallery that led to his apartment. One evil hardly appears but it is succeeded by another, each after one more dreadful than the former. Fate, he saw, had now armed itself against him, and determined to meet him boldly in whatever terrible shape he should advance. Lodowick unsheathed his sword, and stood prepared to receive the worst that should forthcome.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE female stranger, who was brought the night before to the inn, had most distinctly heard the screams of Elwina, and the frequent sounds of Lodowick's voice. Her apartment lay at the end of the gallery, which was guarded (as before observed) by Dominick, whilst his guest should satisfy his lust on the unhappy person of Elwina. She having listened, therefore, for some time, with every anxiety and horror, burst, at last, from her chamber, and making her way along the passage, essayed to pass the vigilance of Dominick. In this, however, she was immediately obstructed, and roughly commanded to return to her place of concealment. His behest, the stranger treated with the most indignant scorn, and still persisted in her attempt to pass. On this, the surly host menaced instant destruction if she dared to proceed, even in the least degree. His threats, however, she despised; and, thereupon, pushing him on one side haughtily with her arm, endeavoured to make her progress good. Dominick, incensed at her proud demeanour, and obstinate refusal of his commands, immediately plunged his weapon deeply in her side. The stranger too, heavily feeling the mortal wound she had received, but still resolved to prosecute her intent, placed herself against the wainscot, and staggered onward to the apartment from whence she had distinguished the voices of those within. Lodowick opening the door at the very instant she had

made her way thither, the wretched female fell forward prostrate on the floor. Notwithstanding, however, the severity of this second shock, she turned herself a few moments afterwards, on her unwounded side, and looking upwards in the face of Lodowick, exclaimed, in a tone more expressive of joy than agony: "it is my boy: it is my son."

At this extraordinary adventure, which could rank only with the former in the greatness of its wonder and extent, Lodowick found himself encompassed in a cloud of horrible insensibility—his tongue clung fast to the roof of his mouth, and rendered him incapable of utterance. The only faculties that remained were his eyes, which rolled alternately on his bleeding mother and the astonished Dominick. Veronica, however, finding the pangs of death grappling hard with her departing body, clasping the hand of Lodowick in hers, and after pressing it to her lips, asked him if he had not a word to bestow on his unhappy mother! Still—still his speech denied the charitable boon. The guilt and horror he experienced had murdered utterance—all was sullen—all silent inward. His sister lay at hand, looking aslant: he beheld her bosom still uncovered. Veronica pursued his eyes. Lodowick, oppressed with fresh terrors, found his heart grow chill—his blood freeze, and his aspect ooze with cold drops of sweat. The hapless mother looked forward too—the hapless mother, too, beheld *the grape and the green leaf*.—Her eyes grew dim, and tottered in their sockets—she saw also the same exact resemblance in Elwina as she had seen in her infant Adelina—it was her child—her long-lost child. The mournful sight was too powerful for all her fortitude to sustain; faintly she lisped, Farewell, my Adelina—adieu, my beloved Lodowick. These melancholy sounds ushered in her death—with Veronica, it was night—was all darkness—she sunk, never to rise again.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A MOTHER and a sister thus apparently crowding together in the silent sepulchre, caused emotions of pity, affection and remorse in the bosom of Lodowick, which he never had experienced before. Perceiving, however, that Adelina began to recover from her state of insensibility, his presence of mind arrived so far to his assistance, that he ordered

Dominick to convey the corpse of his mother to some other apartment, that it might not increase the horrors that his sister had already undergone.

When Elwina opened her deep-swollen eyes, and afterwards appeared susceptible of reason, Lodowick kneeled tenderly by her side, and clasping hold of her clay-cold hand, called upon her in the tender, endearing strains of sister, and of Adelina. Repentance and despair hovering over the desponding villain's aspect, the wretched fair one raised herself from the floor, and anxiously questioned him if he was sincere ! for, to the orphan's bosom, the name of sister excited sensations which the claim of kindred alone could feel. " Sister ! sister !" repeated the alarmed Elwina, " oh ! Lodowick, if thou art indeed my brother, the fates have doomed us to the excess of misery, wretchedness and despair."

" Elwina, thou dear and most injured woman," replied the repentant Lodowick, " answer me to what I shall now question thee : Art thou the daughter of Romane, as thou wast reputed to be ?"

" Oh, no ! oh, no !" rejoined Elwina.

" Wast thou not found, then, by this same Romane, near the forest of Vaudreill, when but an infant ; and when thy companions were all destroyed by barbarous robbers ?"

" So Romane, indeed, has often told me," replied Elwina, once again.

" Then, Elwina, thou art indeed my sister : the marks upon thy bosom," exclaimed the wondering brother, " were sufficient testimonies of our kindred. My mother sought the fruit that thou findest portrayed upon thy bosom, ere thou wert born. Thy father spoke of thee in the sacred moments of his death—thy parent that bore thee blessed thee but a few moments past—she bade thee tenderly farewell, and sunk to everlasting rest—Nay, Elwina, seek not to learn further : thou shalt hear all, if fate should happily ordain it. Thy tender frame is not capable, at present, to encounter fresh shocks of adversity. Already has it been too much enfeebled with the villany of a brother—a brother, however, whose future life, should heaven favour the existence, shall be employed in the endeavour of compensating for the miseries he must have heaped on a virtuous sister and her orphan friends."

At this moment Dominick entered, after having placed the body of Veronica in a place of security and repose.

When Lodowick beheld his host, he raised Elwina gently in his arms, and bade him lead them to an apartment where she might acquire that due tranquillity and rest which could alone restore the peace of mind and body, that he so cruelly had deprived her of.

CHAPTER XXIV.

WHEN Lodowick had seen his sister properly reposed, he descended with Dominick, and thereupon questioned him how his mother, Veronica, could possibly have gained admission into the inn, and still further, access to his apartment. So far as Dominick knew of the stranger's history, he faithfully related; from the adventure in the ground of interment, to that of wounding her in the passage: he did not omit the most trifling article. Thus satisfied, Lodowick could no otherwise than regard the forerunning part of a mystery that still remained to be made known. Dominick, having told his tale so far as in his compass lay, in return, beseeched his guest that he would recount the melancholy tale which touched upon the beautiful stranger in whom he had found a sister. Lodowick, having complied to the utmost of his knowledge with the request of Dominick, it raised a sympathy in his breast, which he had never felt till then.

After some moments of silence, Dominick proposed that they should fly from the inn, as a discovery must inevitably take place; the consequence of which must alternately prove a cruel and ignominious death. "I have three fellows," added he, "who have long been the companions of my dangerous pursuits—they are all steadily attached to my cause, and would spend their dearest blood in my behalf: let us, therefore, take advantage by the wing, and avoid an enemy whose complaints and injuries cannot fail of proving our inevitable ruin."

"Dominick, my friend," answered Lodowick, "full well I know that you embarked your life to serve my purpose; safety is at present in your power. Fly, therefore, and leave me to my fate. I dare encounter the very worst that my evil destiny shall prepare against me; but death alone shall ever make me quit my injured Adelina."

Scarcely were these words pronounced, when a loud clamour was made at the door of the inn. Lodowick and

Dominick, followed by the three fellows, flew, sword in hand, to discover the cause. The first objects that presented themselves to their gaze were Harold, Usmar and Romane. The latter, first beholding Lodowick, most bitterly exclaimed: "there stands the villain!" He, however, anxiously demanded a parley, which was answered only with a torrent of the most keen reproaches. Usmar, the foremost of the party, disdaining all restraint, rushed furiously onward, and aimed his sabre at the head of Lodowick. The impetuous youth, however, knew not that he attacked a man trained up to arms, and possessing the utmost coolness in the hour of danger. His weapon, therefore, was encountered by that of his undaunted foe, who, throwing it dexterously aside, pierced him through the heart. Harold and his companion, seeing their friend thus ignobly fall, made their passage through the threshold of the dwelling; but, being immediately surrounded by Dominick and his followers, they were soon disarmed, and made the prisoners of their detested and incendiary foes.

CHAPTER XXV.

HAROLD and Romane being led to an interior part of the inn, Lodowick commanded the host to set their persons free, and the fellows to place themselves about the different parts of the dwelling, to watch against any other unexpected attack.

This being all obeyed, Lodowick, in a steady and determined tone, thus addressed the unhappy cottagers: "Harold, thy first and anxious wish must, no doubt, be to hear some tidings of thy beloved Elwina,—nay, look not thus frowningly upon me, for I would fain rejoice thine ears with sounds of joy and not reproach. Elwina lives, and will, I hope, for many happy years to come. In a short time, Harold, thou shalt behold her, and, though villain as I am, she will tell thee I am her *brother*. Nay, do not start, Romane, for well thou knowest Elwina never was thy child, but by adoption. Into thy power she came an hapless orphan, and in thy fostering arms she found a father—friend—protector. Elwina, is Adelina, the daughter of Robert Le Devot,—the sister of Lodowick. Confirmation, indubitable as our existence, did I see. Her mother, ere Elwina beheld the light, panted for the juicy grape, the

stain of which she bears upon her bosom—the intervening stain that saved me from a deeper abyss of horror and distraction,—that rescued me from the terrors and the guilt of incest,—that restored a sister to my arms,—that has brought me to the sense of conviction and repentance. Further, I will not add, for words only resemble the poor decayed beings who gave thy adopted Elwina breath—being, as they are now, empty and incorporeal. I shall not repeat, Romane, what passed in the few weeks that I journeyed to your cottage. Let it suffice to remark, that what you, Harold, and all did suffer, it was I who perpetrated the whole—it was I——”

Here one of the fellows entered, and exclaimed that the officers of justice were coming towards the inn.

“Then, Lodowick, thy career is done.”

With these words, he drew a poniard from his bosom, and buried it in the place where it had been concealed.

“My friends, it ill suits the boldness of my soul, and the honour of our house, that I should suffer a cruel and ignominious death, therefore have I added self-destruction to that of my other crimes. Here, Dominick, take this purse, and fly ; for, though I have been the leading instrument of my deep-laid villany, justice may, perhaps, look with a heavy brow on thy interference. Farewell, Dominick—death comes quickly on me—Adieu, my friends—Elwina, farewell—dearest, beloved Elwina,, adieu for ever.”

Thus fell Lodowick, overwhelmed with every human error in the silent grave ; not dying without remorse, nor falling without some share of pity.

CHAPTER XXVI

CHANCE, and that of the most extraordinary complexion, frequently brings those events to light, which the severest researches would find impossible to effect. Eusebius, on the eve of the foregoing fatal tragedy, had flown to the castle of De Barre, to inform his lord that the friends of the Duke O—— began to abate of their inflexibility, and that an early reconciliation would take place betwixt the two families. Soon after the arrival of Eusebius, came the officers of justice to the castle of Le Devot, to seek the person of Veronica, who had, about the same time, poniarded the abbess when asleep, to accomplish her flight from the

convent, which the vigilance of her superior had hitherto rendered ineffectual.

A crime of so heinous a nature struck the Chevalier De Barre and his friends with the deepest horror and chagrin. The honour of their house, he perceived, was soon to be immersed in the deepest disgrace, and one of the noblest branches of their family brought to an ignominious scaffold.

Scarcely had the intelligence of Veronica's crime and flight taken wing, than the report of Lodowick's villany, with the sufferings of Romane and the other cottagers, got entrance into the castle. Nothing was to be heard through the whole neighbouring country, but exclamations of pity for the sufferings of one, and the bitterest execrations against the villany of the other.

The whole castle, at this two-fold tale of misery, became a scene of confusion and consternation : messengers were despatched to the castle of Le Devot, to learn if either Veronica or Lodowick had been discovered. No tidings of them were to be heard, and the officers of justice having, by menaces of the severest tortures, extracted from one of the domestics a confession that he had lately conveyed two of Lodowick's coursers to the inn, they departed thither immediately to trace the guilty Veronica.

Henry De Poitiers and Eusebius were the chief instruments of counsel and consolation. It was now the marquis cursed the pride and perseverance of his soul, for having suffered his wife, his children, and his faithful friend to lay exposed to such a train of complicated villany : the beautiful and the persecuted Elwina, too, forced her passage into the deep-wrung soul, and added much unto the bitterness of his woes.

News having arrived at the castle that the officers were gone in pursuit of the wretched criminal to the house of Dominick, the chevalier desired De Poitiers to follow the same route, and to return with the utmost expedition, when he had discovered any intelligence of Veronica or Lodowick. The marquis, likewise, requested Henry that Eusebius might attend him to alleviate the sorrows of his wife and children, and bring them with him to the castle of De Barre.

● CHAPTER XXVII.

THE officers of justice, on approaching the cottage, perceived Dominick attempting to fly, and being almost covered with blood, they bound and carried him with them to the inn.

When they entered the house, the first melancholy sight that presented itself to their view was Harold and Romane, folding the cloak of Lodowick around his face, who had, but a moment before, atoned for all his sins on earth, by the resignation of that last awful boon—death.

The officers, demanding of Romane and Harold where the lady Veronica was concealed, they turned round, and pointing to Dominick, replied, that he could best answer what they should think proper to demand. The host, however, remained silent and sullen. The fiercest tortures that imagination could devise were threatened; but still he would not deign to answer. The officers, finding Dominick thus inflexible to all their menaces, changed the haughtiness of their tones, and promised mercy—nay, pardon, if he would confess all he knew. "Swear it, then," replied the host. "We swear to heaven that our promise shall be sacred," answered the officers. "Then follow me, and I will lead you to Veronica." On this, Dominick conducted the officers, with Harold and Romane, to the crimson-dyed apartment where the hapless woman lay fast enfolded in the jaws of death.

To paint the horror and surprise of the beholders at this awful, gloomy spectacle, may be easier conceived than described. The officers, after recovering from their consternation, demanded of Dominick the cause of Veronica's death. "Let your superior," replied the determined host, "sign my mercy and pardon, and I will reveal what now rests with the dead and me alone." "Oh, God!" exclaimed Harold, in all the bitterness of despair, "and wilt thou lead me to Elwina thus? Say, is she among the living or the dead? If with the former, oh! do but speak it, and I will on my knees, till they shall ache with bending, to supplicate the benignant voice of mercy in thy favour."

"Harold," answered Dominick, in a voice of more than wonted softness, "thy Elwina lives—not long ago I left her with my mother to allay her sorrows, and to lull her into rest. Follow me, and I will conduct thee to her." On

this, the host brought them along the gallery which led to her apartment: knocking softly at the door, the old woman attended the summons, and gave her son to understand that Elwina had fallen into a slumber. With that, they all withdrew but Harold, who, creeping softly into the chamber, and kneeling by the side of his dearly-beloved, offered up his silent meditations to the Almighty Being for the happy restoration of his grief-surcharged and over-pressed Elwina.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SCARCELY had Romane and the officers of justice descended with Dominick, than De Poitiers and Eusebius entered the threshold. When the old friends beheld each other, notwithstanding their mutual transports of grief, they seized an embrace, that told the joyful emotions of their bosoms. Eusebius first recovered from his surprise, and anxious to learn how his poor children did, (for such he had ever called them,) asked for his dear Sabina. "Oh! my dear friend," answered Romane, heaving a sigh that wrung his very soul, "Sabina did not long survive the cruel separation of her dearly-beloved lord. When Goderville departed, all was sorrow, despair, misery and misfortune. The neighbouring peasants' cattle rotted—their fields produced no corn—famine was seen in every countenance—charity came trembling round our doors, and old age, in feeble accents, lisped forth its pressing wants. Our money was scattered in every part to relieve the people's wants—our coffers were emptied, and our magazines thrown open to feed the hungry and the wretched—like those whom lately we had given the hospitable boon, we too did find the lean-stretched hand of penury and distress burst woefully against us. Sabina, worn down with melancholy, despair and grief, yielded up her wretched life. Her children's house was seized for dear charity's sake. My homely cottage then became their future dwelling. There, Eusebius, they found a humble life—content—tranquillity, and every lowly comfort, till Lodowick became enamoured of Elwina—Elwina, so called by me, coming as she did, an orphan to my arms.—Elwina—the daughter—the Adelina of Robert Le Devot—the wretched sister of the guilty Lodowick."

At the sound of Lodowick, they were interrupted from above, with the exclamations of: "Oh! where is Romane!

—Romane—Romane, ascend! and behold Elwina sunk to everlasting peace. This awful summons was instantly obeyed by the invoked cottager, who requested thereupon, that Eusebius and De Poitiers should follow. Harold at the door encountered Romane, and, with horror inexplicable in his looks, together with an agony of voice that chilled him to the very soul, exclaimed: "Oh! my friend, behold thy dear Elwina there! See, she slept; but slept never to rise again. Her breath is gone—the channels of her blood are stopped—one sigh she gave—once called on Harold—but sighed—but called no more. The roses on her cheek were faded off—her eyes do lack their animated lustre—her lips are deathly pale—her clay-cold hand—oh! Romane, feel but her clay-cold hand, and then——"

On this, Harold cast his eyes around and beheld Eusebius—He started upwards, and suffering his voice to droop, exclaimed: "Ah! my aged friend, art thou also here to view this horrid spectacle of sorrow and of death! This mournful sepulchre of thy devoted friends! This awful monument of innocence and guilt. Comest thou not, Eusebius, to behold the children of thy master fall the victims of his obduracy and his pride? If thou dost, old man," continued Harold, bursting forth in all the vehemence of distraction and of rage, "return to Goderville—command him to appear also—Mark me well, Eusebius—'tis Harold that commands—say not his son, for if thou dost, old man, thy breath shall ever tainted be with blackest falsehood—Harold never was his son—Sabina never was his wife—Justine never was his child, and old Romane never was his friend. If Goderville had ever been a husband, a father, or a friend, would he have abandoned all to wretchedness, oblivion and to want? Then, ere I follow my dear Elwina to the tomb, let the father's name be ever blotted from the sacred list of kindred and of friendship. Goderville did swear, and thou, Romane, wast witness to the oath, that he never would see his wife or children more. His wish is half-fulfilled—Sabina is gone—Elwina is dead—Harold soon shall follow. Romane, look to Justine—she is thine—love her for her brother's sake—nay, my friends, oppose not my intent—let loose my arms, for Hercules himself could not restrain my dire intent—Harold shall follow his Elwina to the grave. If Lodowick dare encounter death, shall I fear the stings of his unerring dart? Life to me would be perpetual sorrow—a burning hell on earth—then, why not mount from earth

to heaven ! why not meet my loved Elwina, and rest with her in everlasting peace ?" At these last awful sounds, Harold embraced the death, as Lodowick had done before.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE gloomy sable curtain that had overwhelmed the house of Dominick, struck every one with that melancholy horror which rendered them equally careless of existence or annihilation. Death stared them so terribly in the face, that life, in fact, was scared from each one's cheek, and nothing appeared thereon but ghastly paleness and swollen despair. The officers of justice, accustomed as they were to scenes of slaughter, woe and executions, shrunk back at the dismal sweep that death had made around them. Most piercing lamentations swelled every dreary avenue, and sprung a knell that alarmed even the bare-bone king of terrors. De Poitiers having beheld the self-sacrificed Lodowick—the fresh-bleeding Veronica—the tranquil death of the beautiful Elwina—the heroic exit of the fierce, determined Harold, found his soul sicken with so much horror, that he left the inn, and bade his friends to follow. "Romane," said Henry, "one corpse have I seen whose features are to me unknown." "It is Usmar's," replied the cottager, "who has been a sufferer in this dreadful scene of woe. Justine, the daughter of Goderville, his only remaining child, now dwells at his habitation." "Some one, therefore," answered De Poitiers, "must go hence and bring her to the castle—Eusebius, let that task be thine : my domestics shall convey the corpse of Usmar to his native residence. They are at thy command ; be quick, my aged friend, and glad thy hapless master's eyes with the wished-for view of his only-beloved child." The body of Usmar being wrapped up in fine white linen, was safely placed across the courser of De Poitiers, whose coat was like to driven snow, and conducted onwards by the grief-worn Eusebius. This ceremony being performed, Henry requested Romane, and the other officers of justice, that they should prepare the bodies of those within, in order to proceed forward to the castle, whilst he should go in quest of the bishop, who presided over a neighbouring abbey, to assist in the funeral procession.

The abbey that De Poitiers resorted to had long been

famous for its riches, splendour and magnificence. When he arrived thither, grand mass was in the act of being performed by the bishop. As he advanced, therefore, towards the altar, he presented a purse, which contained a thousand crowns; upon which he delivered his embassy to the priest, who communicated it to the bishop, and everything was prepared in the course of an hour to assist in the procession to the castle.

The ceremony being registered in the archives of the church, it was found to proceed as underneath:

The golden crucifix, supported by a priest.—The bishop, mounted on a white courser.—Twelve priests on foot, chaunting a requiem to the souls of the dead.—Romane on horseback.—The dean and vicar, mounted on white coursers.—The bodies of Harold and Elwina, wrapt in fine white linen, and supported by twelve men, side by side.—Six more priests, two by two, chaunting the requiem.—Henry de Poitiers on horseback.—The deacon and sub-deacon, mounted on white coursers.—The bodies of Lodowick and Veronica wrapped together in black woollen cloth, and supported in a vehicle led by four horses.—The chaplain on horseback.—Four officers of justice on horseback.—Dominick on foot, his hands bound behind.—Four officers of justice on horseback, with swords drawn.—The chief officer of justice mounted on a black courser, with his drawn sword.

In this manner did the mournful procession move forward along the banks of the Seine to the castle of De Barre, followed by a thousand spectators who had assembled on the way, and who devoutly joined in the requiem that was chaunted for the souls of the dead.

Henry De Poitiers first broke through the solemn order, and entered the gates. He was immediately met by the Chevalier his father, the Marquis St. Amand, Dagobert, and the domestics clothed in the deepest sables. In a few words, he prepared them for the solemn entry—beseeched them to meet the worst of miseries. They seemed resigned, and the mournful cavalcade advanced in all the awful pomp of sepulchral horror.

That night, the bishop and his holy retinue took up their abode in the castle. Every regard that could be paid to the sanctity of their order, they received from the hospitality of De Barre and his guests.

In the morning, Romane arrived at the castle with the

beauteous and mournful Justine. She appeared the counterpart of the departed Sabina. St. Amand received her with that effusion of joy and repentance, which bespoke at once the gladness that he had ever received in her endearing presence, and the regret that he experienced for the unhappy fate of her beloved mother.

The same day, a part of the ground belonging to the castle of Le Devot being consecrated by the bishop, the remains of Veronica, Lodowick, Harold and Elwina, were conducted thither, and interred with every funeral pomp. As an atonement, however, for the crimes of the mother and the son, and at the same time in remembrance of the misfortunes of Harold and his wife, the castle was presented to the bishop as a foundation for some religious order, and endowed with many rich gifts both by De Barre and the Marquis St. Amand, together with an annual income for its support.

When the time was elapsed, appropriated to the remembrance of the dead, Henry De Poitiers and Justine were clasped together in the sacred bonds of matrimony.

The Chevalier De Barre and the Marquis St. Amand, having lived to see their children blessed with a numerous and virtuous offspring, contentedly terminated a sacred score of years, leaving their joint estates to Henry and his beloved Justine.

Eusebius and Romane, sunk down with reverend age at last, beheld a noble race spring forward to the glory of their beloved master's name—obliterating, by their heroic and noble acts, the crimes and dire misdeeds of their unhappy kindred.

Dominick, notwithstanding the sacred promises that he had received from the officers of justice, was doomed to suffer the severest sentence of the law. On the interference, however, of the Chevalier De Barre and the Marquis St. Amand, the tortures of the rack were changed to decapitation, which he suffered with more fortitude than could be expected from the magnitude of iniquity that he laboured under.

